Sounding Seamus Heaney's Anthologies

Research MA Literary Studies

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List of Abbreviations

B: *Beowulf*

DN: *Death of a Naturalist*

FK: *Finders Keepers: Selected Prose 1971-2001*

GT: *The Government of the Tongue: The 1986 T.S. Memorial Lectures and Other Critical Writings*

N: *North*

OG: *Opened Ground: Poems 1966-1996*

P: *Preoccupations: Selected Prose 1968-1978*

RB: *The Rattle Bag*

RP: *The Redress of Poetry: Oxford Lectures*

S72: *Soundings 72*

S2: *Soundings 2*

SB: *The School Bag*

SI: *Station Island*

SS: *Stepping Stones: Interviews with Seamus Heaney*

ST: *Seeing Things*

WO: *Wintering Out*

Introduction

For some time now, it has been possible to observe a trend toward the expansion of the scholarly field devoted to Seamus Heaney (1939-2013) to include his work in genres other than poetry. Thus, for example, Michael Cavanagh's *Professing Poetry: Seamus Heaney's Poetics* (2009) sets itself up as one of only two studies that attempts "to put all of Heaney's criticism to date into perspective and to give it its due along with the poetry", acknowledging Neil Corcoran's *Poetry of Seamus Heaney* (1998) as its only true predecessor in the study of Heaney's prose (1998, 3). Richard Rawkin Russell's *Seamus Heaney's Regions* (2014), meanwhile, must be recommended as one of the most inclusive studies of Heaney to date. Examining not just the poetry, written prose and drama, but also Heaney's association with various radio stations and his perennial interest in translation Russell's effort at synthesising an interpretation of Heaney's vast corpus using a single yet dynamic concept of regionalism represents a benchmark for future studies of its kind. Finally, Eugene O'Brien's *Seamus Heaney as Aesthetic Thinker: A Study of the Prose* (2016) is an example of attempts by critics to reformulate Heaney's significance by positioning his work in new discursive contexts - in this case, by treating Heaney "as an aesthetic thinker in the European intellectual tradition" (2016, 1). As these studies surely suggest, Heaney cannot be considered or valued as a writer of poetry solely, and has left to posterity an extensive collection of writings that is capable of yielding much to innovative critical inquiry.

In the course of these extremely welcome developments, however, Heaney's work as the anthologist of the first two issues of the *Soundings* anthology series (1972 and 1974, respectively), and subsequently *The Rattle Bag* (1982) and *The School Bag* (1997), both of which he co-edited alongside his friend and fellow poet Ted Hughes, has remained underexamined. This is perhaps unsurprising given the relatively little critical treatment received by anthologies more generally. Book-length studies devoted to the genre are few and far between: Anne Ferry's monograph *Tradition and the Individual Poem: An Inquiry into Anthologies* (2001) represents the most contemporary of its kind that I have been able to find, and the author herself admits that "of the remarkably little that has been written about printed anthologies of poetry in English, most is fragmentary and marginal to some other interest" (2001, 8). Yet, as Barbara Korte notes in her introduction to a collection of lectures given at a symposium on anthologies held in Blaubeuren, Germany, in 1999, "since the invention of print (and the resulting possibility of mass-producing books) at the latest, anthologies have been a staple institution for the mediation of poetry" (2000, 5). In this guise, they have served both to preserve and disseminate poetry, as well as to "conserve the principles for their selection", making them "exemplary objects for changing poetic techniques and themes as well as changes in poetic tastes" (2000, 9). The relative paucity of academic attention paid to anthologies, therefore, is not

reflective of the importance of the roles performed by the genre, meaning that said paucity is, in fact, a lack in need of correction.

Claims for the cultural work enacted by anthologies often crystallize in debates over their role in representing and perpetuating particular canons of poetry, and there are a number of rightly famous examples of the genre that have either stamped their mark on the tastes of subsequent generations or, conversely, have sought to challenge received norms and standards concerning poetry. Francis Turner Palgrave's *The Golden Treasury* (1861) is perhaps the most successful example of the first, and has been treated in a sustained and enlightening manner by Ferry. W.B. Yeats' edition of *The Oxford Book of Verse* (1936), meanwhile, is just one of the more notorious examples of the second, with several others analysed by Peter J. Kalliney in the second chapter of his *Commonwealth of Letters: British Literary Culture and the Emergence of Postcolonial Aesthetics* (2013); a work dedicated to understanding the role of literary institutions, anthologies amongst them, in facilitating interactions between modernism and postcolonialism, and thus in defining the aesthetic of postcolonial writing as it emerged in the 20th century.

As a poet who recollects in 'The Ministry of Fear': "Ulster was British, but with no rights on/The English lyric", it is easy to see why debates over canonicity offer a promising avenue by which to approach Heaney's anthologies (*N*, 60). Corcoran notes that Heaney's criticism bears frequent testimony to "acts of redress or reclamation" involving the sustained and positive treatment of the work of poets previously "little known or appreciated by 'the English critics'", and observes further that "this making manifest of what has been hidden or disregarded is itself a politically charged act"; effective in delivering "revisionary jolts" to poetry canons that otherwise serve as vehicles for cultural imperialism (1998, 220). A similar reading is proposed by Russell in respect to the two anthologies produced in partnership with Hughes. Presenting *The Rattle Bag* as a re-enactment of Heaney's rejection of a "genteel English tradition" that excludes modern vernacular poetry; *The School Bag* as a token of "Heaney's continued attempts to recover a full range of regional voices in Britain and Ireland outside the dominant influence of London", Russell registers a significant contiguity between the range of poems collected across the two volumes and Heaney's preoccupation with the boundaries of 'English Literature', any narrow conception of which both anthologies are shown to undermine (2014, 23; 324). This might also be connected to Heaney's negative response in 'An Open Letter' (1983) to being included in Blake Morrison' and Andrew Motion's anthology *The Penguin Book of Contemporary British Poetry* (1982),which Robert Crawford suggests demonstrates the rural County Derry-born poet's wariness about having his "'barbarian' un-English [identity] submerged in an English-dominated 'British' context. For that context, like an undevolved monolithic English Literature, ignores the strength of their 'provincial' traditions, and uses that adjective 'provincial' without any awareness of the cultural imperialism the term implies" (2000, 290). Crawford's appropriation of the political concept of 'devolution' as a

metaphor for the literary-critical deconstruction of any unified, singular identity of the phrase 'English Literature' underscores the political implications of that activity, and it is certainly clear from 'An Open Letter' that Heaney himself was aware that such implications potentially inhere in the anthologist's role as a selector of poems.

Yet, as Heaney's very rejection of the British label indicates, an anthology is more than just the sum of poems it collects. An anthology is a "work", in Roland Barthes' definition of the term: a "fragment of substance" that "can be seen" and "held in the hand" (2010, 1327). Proper attention to the anthology as a work requires that the critic pay heed to what Gérard Genette calls "paratexts": "accompanying productions" that "surround and extend" a text, "precisely in order to present it, in the usual sense of this verb but also in the strongest sense: to make present, to ensure the text's presence in the world, its 'reception' and consumption in the form (nowadays, at least) of a book" (1997, 1). Genette calls those paratexts that are located within the confines of the work itself "peritexts", and within this category falls such vital components of an anthology as the preface, title, the titles of the poems themselves, and also any additional information - publication dates and biographical information about the poets, for instance – that the anthologist has seen fit to include in the work (1997, 4). It also requires that the critic accepts as immanent the spatial configuration of the poems manifested by the anthology's particular arrangement, since this too is implied in the anthology's status as a work. The term *anthology* derives from the Greek noun *anthos*, meaning 'flower', and the verb *legein*, 'to gather', which suggests that the anthologist is a gatherer of poems. Selection is, however, just one of the anthologist's roles: he also arranges and presents his collection, meaning that the anthology itself is a garden of flowers accompanied by signposts and information deliberately designed to guide viewers' perception and understanding of its contents. Interpretations that attribute prime significance to the operations of inclusion and exclusion inherent in the anthologist's role as a selector risk marginalising that figure's other roles, and thereby eliding much that makes the anthologist's work distinctive in each case.

This is not to say, of course, that attention to those other roles will necessarily undermine arguments for the political significance of anthologies, but it does open up new avenues by which to approach them. All four of Heaney's anthologies evince a commitment towards the education of the reader, providing lessons in how to read the poems collected first and foremost, but also poetry generally. They therefore do not solely introduce the reader to new poems, but also school him/her in how to read them, achieving this by means of both paratextual strategies and the arrangement. In order for these lessons to be most widely effective, they would ideally be imparted by the anthology alone, that is, without additionally requiring the reader to learn information not supplied in its pages. Assuming this suggests the anthologies' amenability to a 'bottom-up' approach that takes the works as its starting point and attempts to show the kinds of reading they facilitate. The results of said analyses could then serve as models to be signified by the analyst, who proceeds to offer

interpretations of why the anthologist, in this case Heaney, might want to trigger those particular kinds of reading in his readership. Such is the trajectory followed by this thesis, which begins with an analysis of each anthology's preface; moves next to consider the interaction between the preface, other peritexts, and the arrangement as it is realised in a reading of a selection of the anthologised poems, and closes finally by developing suggestions for the significance of the reading experiences triggered in relation to other aspects of Heaney's career.

Heaney, as I illustrate briefly in the opening chapter's introduction, was a consummate storyteller in possession of a narrative imagination that permeates much of the poetry, the lectures and, as the chapter will demonstrate, the anthology prefaces. Though knowledge of Heaney's propensity for storytelling is not prerequisite for the reader to experience many of his stories' effects, it nevertheless elucidates a level at which unifying links can be drawn within Heaney's opus, and also serves to explain my decision to begin with the narratological analysis of the four prefaces. Taking its cue from Mieke Bal's *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative* (1997), this analysis sets out to describe the prefaces in terms not just of *what* they communicate but *how* they do so, and takes as its starting point the relative prevalence of the narrative mode in *The Rattle Bag* and *The School Bag* compared to the *Soundings* prefaces, both of which are primarily discursive but which nevertheless contain several crucial elements that are comprehensible within Bal's theory. Such formal differences indicate that the prefaces are executing different paratextual strategies, making it this chapter's task to suggest what these might be, with cases built using the textual descriptions and comparisons gleaned by applying Bal's narratology. The arguments of this chapter will demonstrate the fundamental part played by storytelling within Heaney's work as an anthologist, and will be returned to frequently in the chapters that follow.

In the second chapter, narratological analysis is substituted for close-readings of a selection of the anthologised poetry, each of which is undertaken in order to reify the effects of the respective anthologies' peritexts and arrangement on the reader's experience of the poem(s) in question. Such readings will, of course, draw substantially on the arguments of the previous chapter, and will also incorporate interpretations of peritexts not yet considered: the poem's title, for example, or that of the anthology itself. Through its demonstration of how the anthologist's presentation of a collection affects the interpretation of the poems selected, this chapter bears implicit testimony to an argument first made by Robert Graves and Laura Rider in their polemic *A Pamphlet against Anthologies* (1928), and subsequently reproduced in a more balanced fashion by Ferry in *An Inquiry*. According to the earlier pair, "no matter…in what good faith a private anthology is made, it becomes, when published, an organised theft of the signatures of the original poets, for it is the whole intention of a private anthology to make the included poems the anthologist's own" (2002, 169). Ferry, meanwhile, argues that "the anthologist as author of the book supplants the author of the poem in choosing how it should be presented, with interpretive consequences" (2001, 2). These observations suggest the anthologist's

directives as an inescapable influence upon the reader's perception of the poems, with authorial decisions concerning the arrangement and presentation proving an affective driver in their interpretation. Yet, I would also argue, the poems are not passive objects in this process, being rather capable of reflecting back upon and generating insight into the very 'accompanying productions' that present them. To quote Ernst van Alphen, the poems are not only "the objects of framing", but also "function, in turn, as a frame", and thereby actively participate in an interpretive process that moves bilaterally between the poem and its paratexts, and also those poems adjacent to it (2005, xvi). In this way, close-reading the poems can help shed light on the paratexts and arrangement themselves, rather than simply the other way around. Furthermore, the limits of the authorial function of the anthologist are made apparent, as the poems are treated as agents in and of themselves, and thus constitute, along with the reader, an interpretive factor not controlled by the anthologist.

The third chapter, deliberately titled '*Heaney's* Anthologies', moves finally to an 'authorial' interpretation that goes in search of significant connections between the anthologies and other aspects of Heaney's career. The *Soundings* series, which (insofar as I can tell) has yet to receive any treatment by scholars, is considered in relation to the Northern Irish Troubles, whilst both *The Rattle Bag* and *The School Bag* are treated as extensions of Heaney's activities as a "poet-professor", and thus of his engagement with norms and standards of the literary studies discipline (*FK*, loc.1423). In Genette's idiom, this chapter treats the freshly interpreted peritexts as *thresholds* which, as well as providing access into the poems collected, allow the reader to step out beyond the immediate confines of the work, and thus to recognise as potential paratexts other works that are peripheral to the one in question. Genette calls these 'external' paratexts "epitexts", and this chapter includes within this group a selection of Heaney's poems, prose, and interviews, all of which, I contend, can help to make sense of Heaney's anthologies (1997, 3). This chapter makes no claim to a definitive authorial interpretation of the anthologies, however, being rather concerned to suggest the potential of the anthologies to interconnect with a diverse range of Heaney's preoccupations, not all of which can be explored fully here.

To conclude this introduction and in anticipation of this thesis' final remarks, I want to comment on my title. The *Oxford English Dictionary* identifies the phrase 'to sound out' as a synonym of 'to feel out', and thus defines it as: "to search out or explore"; "to test, look for, or find out by careful investigation or observation" (*OED*). This sense has, I hope, already been registered by the reader, and serves to represent this thesis as one geared towards the analysis and interpretation of Seamus Heaney's anthologies. Heaney himself used the word 'sounding' frequently, however, and the sense in which he meant it is not always so clear-cut. Besides constituting the title of an anthology series, the word features in poems such as 'The Gifts of Rain':

He fords

His life by sounding.

Soundings.

WO, 13

It appears, too, in the critical prose, in the title 'Sounding Auden', for example, or in the declaration that John Clare's "unmistakeable signature is written in most distinctively and sounded forth most spontaneously in the scores of fourteen-line poems which Clare wrote about small incidents involving the flora and fauna of rural Northamptonshire" (*RP*, 65). It also plays an important part in descriptions of poetry in general, as when Heaney explains that rhymes and poems "learned early on…end up being sounding lines out to the world and into yourself" (*SS*, loc.927). As this (non-exhaustive) list suggests, the significance of Heaney's use of 'soundings' is multivalent, rendering it necessary for our understanding of his work to clarify the different senses in which he used the word. This, I believe, can be achieved by *sounding* Heaney's anthologies, making that activity a means of exploring the very significance of 'sounding' itself.

Chapter 1: The Prefaces

Speaking in Stockholm as the 1995 Nobel Laureate for Literature, Heaney began his 'Crediting Poetry' lecture with a story from his childhood, of how he "first encountered the name of the city of Stockholm" as it swept down "the aerial wire attached to the topmost branch of the chestnut tree" at the family farm in rural Country Derry, to be emitted by the radio set that sat in the Heaney's kitchen (*OG*, 447-8). For those familiar with Heaney's prose more generally, the immediate foray into narrative appears characteristic. *Preoccupations* (1980), Heaney's first published prose volume, opens with an essay entitled 'Mossbawn', in which memories of childhood are interweaved with topographical descriptions of the regions surrounding his first family home; *The Government of the Tongue* (1988), the second, begins similarly with a story in which Heaney and his friend David Hammond call off a studio recording in response to bomb explosions in Belfast. The latter story is preludial, providing Heaney with the material from which to draw an abstraction between "song" and "suffering" that informs the volume as a whole (*GT*, loc.56). The stories told in 'Mossbawn', meanwhile, are sown throughout, each one embedding personal memory in the landscape in order to consolidate links between person and place. Both essays have received substantial critical commentary, and will in fact be returned to in the third chapter. I mention them now, though, in order to illustrate not just Heaney's disposition towards storytelling, but also the different roles stories play in his prose.

The poetry, too, bears witness to Heaney's narrative imagination, as indeed a long poem such as 'Station Island' clearly attests. Embarking on a pilgrimage to "face [his] station", the speaker of this twelve-canto poem sets out on a journey not dissimilar from that enacted in the later *Seeing Things* volume, throughout which allusions to both Dante and Virgil serve to imagine the poet as on a journey akin to journeys undertaken by the character Dante in *The Divine Comedy* and Aeneas in Book VI of the *Aeneid*, with Heaney setting off to "see poetry" and to encounter the ghost of his recently deceased father **(***SI*, 63; *ST*, 7). Narrative thus permeates both individual poems and entire volumes, and is even employed by Heaney as a tool for making sense of his opus as a whole. His famous 'stepping stones' metaphor, enunciated most definitively in the Nobel lecture, has since been adopted as the title of the extended series of interviews conducted by Dennis O'Driscoll, which stands today as the closest thing scholars have to the poet's autobiography (2009). In Stockholm, Heaney observed how those "gutturals and sibilants of European speech" that issued from the radio constituted the first step on "a journey into the wideness of the world" and into "language, a journey where each point of arrival – whether in one's poetry or one's life – turned out to be a stepping stone rather than a destination, and it is that journey which has brought me now to this honoured spot" (*OG*, 449). Each poem, then, and indeed each volume, constitutes an event in the story of Heaney's life, and

this view is embodied by O'Driscoll's *Stepping Stones: Interviews with Seamus Heaney* (2009), which reproduces the volumes' titles as chapter headings, and thus represents a biographical narrative the trajectory of which appears to have been plotted using the poetry as coordinates.

As these examples clearly indicate, storytelling constituted a vital component of Heaney's literary and critical repertoire, whilst narrative has itself become a pervasive means for commentators to frame and thus make sense of his output. In this chapter, I want to extend these insights into a reading of the prefaces of Heaney's anthologies, and thus to highlight the importance of storytelling to his work as an anthologist. Before doing so, however, it is important to recognise that the use of narrative is not identical across all four prefaces, and that therefore the analysis must organise itself in response to these differences. Helpful here is Bal's distinction between *text*, *story* and *fabula*; three "layers" which, she argues, form the basis for narratological analysis (1997, 6). These terms are defined as follows:

> A *narrative text* is a text in which an agent relates ('tells') a story in a particular medium, such as language…A *story* is a fabula that is presented in a certain manner. A *fabula* is a series of logically and chronologically related events that are caused or experienced by actors. An *event* is the transition from one state to another state. *Actors* are agents that perform actions. They are not necessarily human. *To act* is defined here as to cause or to experience an event.
>
> 1997, 5

As was mentioned in the introduction, whilst *The Rattle Bag* and *School Bag* prefaces are composed primarily of narrative, the *Soundings* prefaces are predominantly discursive, resorting to narrative only occasionally. They remain, however, peculiarly receptive to an analysis which takes Bal's concept of the fabula as its starting point, and thus are fit (if unexpected) candidates for narratological analysis. In response to this broad formal difference between the earlier and later two prefaces, this chapter is divided into two sections, the first of which deals primarily (although not exclusively) with *The Rattle Bag* and *School Bag*; the second, the *Soundings* series.

Some final notes concerning terminology: for Bal, "as soon as there is language, there is a speaker who utters it; as soon as those linguistic utterances constitute a narrative text, there is a narrator, a narrating subject" (1997, 22). Narratological analysis presupposes the primacy of narrative in the text being described, and as such consistently refers to the speaker as 'the narrator'. For clarity's sake, I have opted to follow this practice even when analysing the *Soundings* prefaces, in which the speaker is more often a describing or declaring subject than, strictly, a narrating subject. A purely linguistic subject, it is clear that this narrator is restricted to the text itself. The narrator is therefore not to be identified with the author (who is external to the text), nor can we speak of a single

narrator of all four prefaces. Each text, rather, expresses its own narrator, which persists for the duration of the text and no further. In the interests of both brevity and clarity, I will refer to the narrator and to each preface according to the title of its respective anthology, instead of the unnecessarily wordy 'the narrator of the editor's note in *Soundings 72'*, 'the *Soundings 72* narrator', and so forth. In respect to pronouns, I follow Bal in referring to the narrator as 'it' rather 'he', in order to keep firmly in view the distinction between narrator and biographical author.

I

Comparing the four prefaces at a textual level, several potentially significant observations are possible. Already acknowledged is the ratio of narrative to non-narrative text in each. Even without the relevant statistical data, it is clear that *The School Bag* and *The Rattle Bag* contain proportionately more narrative text than do the two *Soundings*, but whilst this is bound to affect the reception of the text by a reader, for now the interpretation of these effects must be postponed. Of greater relevance presently are the types of narration on display in those fragments which fit the strict definition of narrative. What follows is a selection of these:

> My brief as editor was to provide a selection of new work by Irish poets and my hopes were simply to put together a collection of good poems. I owe the title to a programme that Maurice Leitch produced some time ago on the Northern Ireland Service of the BBC.
>
> *S72*, 6

> There were thirty-five poets represented in *Soundings '72*. Over the last eighteen months, ten of them have published full-length volumes of their own, three have produced shorter pamphlet collections and two have new books in the press.
>
> *S2*, 5

These passages, although not especially inspiring pieces of narrative, illustrate Bal's distinction between "character-bound narration" and "external narration" (1997, 22). In both, a story is related: in the first, the very beginning of a fabula comprising the genesis and development of the anthology is told; in the second, the events of the last eighteen months are related. Crucially, however, the position of the narrator relative to the story differs in each, for whereas in the first example the narrator is part of the story told, in the second it is not. The first is an example of character-bound narration: narration in which "the speaking subject is to be identified with a character in the fabula it itself narrates" (1997, 22). The second is one of external narration, in which "the narrator never refers to itself as a character" (1997, 22). The difference between these two types of narration should be familiar from

day-to-day conversation: the first is a typical feature of spoken acts of memory, in which speaking subjects narrate events which involved them in the past; the second, meanwhile, occurs whenever we tell stories that involve others but not ourselves.

A subtler and therefore more engaging illustration of the character-bound/external narration distinction can be made of the opening sentences of *The Rattle Bag*:

> This anthology amassed itself like a cairn. Most of the poems lay about for the taking in places already well known to people, younger or older, who read verse; only a few came from the by-ways. They were picked up one by one and left *in situ* without much initial thought being given to the stuff already in the pile of the position that they might occupy in the final shape. Indeed, the thought of shaping did not arise until the hunt for individual poems had lost its excitement, and then we decided to arrange the material in alphabetical order according to the titles or first lines rather than thematically or chronologically or according to author.
>
> *RB*, 19

Much like the selection from *Soundings 72*, this passage relates part of the fabula of the anthology's creation. It is more detailed, however, as well as more readily interpretable as a (partially) fictionalised account of that series of events. This perception is facilitated in part by certain textual features, one of which is the initial ambiguity concerning the status of the narration. Until the pronoun "we" is heard halfway through the final sentence, the reader is unsure whether the narration is external or character-bound; to demonstrate this, we need only replace 'we' with 'Heaney and Hughes' and remark on how the preceding utterances read the same regardless. The result is the forced suspension of judgement on the status of the narration, an effect which is unique to *The Rattle Bag* and which, as has been suggested, affects the reception of the text by the reader. It is clear too that this feature of the text is reinforced at the level of the story itself, which effectively re-works the fabula in order to present the anthology as an actor in its own creation tale. The reader knows, in other words, that in the actual series of events, the anthologists created the anthology. As told in the opening sentence, however, this is not the case: the anthology was, rather, self-generating; it "amassed *itself*". In this passage, therefore, all three layers identified by Bal can be understood as interacting to produce a sense of ambiguity and fictionality.

The School Bag, the only anthology not yet mentioned, is different. From the start, the narration is explicit in situating its narrator as character-bound:

> We wanted this anthology to be different from *The Rattle Bag*, less of a carnival, more like a checklist.
>
> *SB*, xv

A similar statement is made by the narrator of *Soundings 2*, which switches into character-bound narration in the sentence immediately following the example of external narration quoted previously:

> With so many voices finding their own audience, I thought it would be better if this issue concentrated on less established writers.
>
> *S2* 5

As these and previous selections indicate, a common feature of all four prefaces is the narration of at least part of the fabula of the anthology's creation. Obviously, the amount of space and time devoted to telling such correlates with the proportion of narrative to non-narrative text in each. At first glance, therefore, *The School Bag* and *The Rattle Bag* are far more invested in telling the story of their creation than are the *Soundings*'. Since in all four cases the fabula is told as a memory, the narrator becomes a character for the duration of its narration. This affects the relationship between the reader and the narrator, for by becoming a character the narrator is *characterised*. It becomes possible, in other words, for the reader to learn about the narrator *as if it were a person*. I will call the characterised narrator 'the anthologist'.

The anthologist of *The School Bag* is authoritative, donnish, and earnest. The memory of its original desires for the anthology, which are presented as if fully formed from the outset, is clearly conveyed in language that is suggestive of a pedagogic figure (see above). The memory of the selection process, meanwhile, which dominates the final paragraph, is both expressed in similar language and indicative of a figure committed and unwavering in its intentions:

> Considerations of space influenced our decision to take the one-poem-per-poet approach, but once we adopted it, we found a new point and edge to the problem of choosing representative work… Time and again we were forced to decide whether personal affection for something not particularly 'major' could be allowed to outweigh the historical and canonical claims of a more obvious selection.
>
> *SB* xv

The School Bag anthologist can be productively compared to that of *The Rattle Bag*, who appears to be a very different character. More childlike in the sense of whimsical, this anthologist is given to the excitement of the hunt, and recalls itself as fully absorbed by immediate tasks rather than proceeding with a grander plan firmly in view. As well as this, selection is remembered in *The Rattle Bag* as a relatively unthinking, physical, outdoors activity rather than mental exercise in judgement: "picking up and leaving *in situ*" rather than a "problem of choosing". Such contrasts are of course likewise reflected in representation of the earlier anthology as "a carnival". For a reader of *The Rattle Bag* in the fifteen years before *The School Bag* was published, however, this retrospective would have been

unavailable; its anthologist's character, on the other hand, has remained accessible since the anthology's publication in 1982, and thus exists independently of its comparison with the later work.

Discussing *The Rattle Bag* with O'Driscoll, Seamus Heaney describes it as "a book that clicked its heels" (*SS*, loc.7631). We might easily call this a *characterisation* of the work – certainly, it anthropomorphises the work using the image of Bob Dylan's Mr. Bojangles, who "clicked up his heels" for joy (2013). Whilst clearly we cannot rely on this colloquial use of 'characterisation' being synonymous with the more formulated, theoretically defined usage prescribed in Bal's narratology, it is nevertheless helpful to acknowledge that these sorts of characterisations are a not infrequent occurrence in literary discourse. Often, for example, we characterise a book using the names of authors whose works are perceived as so idiosyncratic that they produce adjectives for describing that of others. Thus a particular passage might be called Joycean or Deleuzian; a poem might be Plathian. Characterisation in this broadest sense is not synonymous with interpretation, although it should be considered an essential component of that activity. Characterising a given work in a certain way can, in other words, predispose a reader familiar with that description to approach it differently, but cannot guarantee the outcome of interpretations subsequently performed.

In respect to anthologies, my argument is that the 'character' of the prefaces (identified above as 'the anthologist', and defined narratologically) is as important to the more general characterisation of the work as are the 'characters' (colloquially used) of the poems included. The anthologist, in other words, lends its character to the work it prefaces, thus contributing to the characterisation of the work as a whole. Given Genette's definition of paratexts, the preface may even be considered more determinant of the anthology's 'character' than the selection: the decision depends in each case on the extent to which the preface's presentation of the poems selected determines their character, or inversely the extent to which the individual poems are able to hold their own, as it were. Of course, from this argument it follows that other paratexts (the title, for example) help to characterise the anthology also. I do not dispute this, but nevertheless privilege the preface as an especially 'characterising' paratext due to the higher likelihood that it will be read as narrative, and thus as spoken by a potentially characterisable narrator. In the second chapter, the interpretive directions supplied by the prefaces will be considered in further detail, as well as alongside those supplied by other peritexts. Now, however, we proceed to this chapter's second section, and so concentrate our focus more on the *Soundings* series.

II

In both *Soundings 72* and *Soundings* 2, the relative lack of character-bound narration means that the narrator does not characterise itself to anywhere near the same extent as in the later anthologies. As

such, an analysis that proceeds along the same path as before will find itself running into difficulties. An alternate route suggests itself, however, once we allow a brief incursion into Heaney's prose; specifically, if we follow an interpretive detour to Heaney's review of the Gaelic poetry anthology *An Duanaire, 1600-1900: Poems of the Dispossessed* (1981). Collected in *The Government of the Tongue* as 'The Poems of the Dispossessed Repossessed', there Heaney observes:

> There are two ways with anthologies: Palgrave's, and (though he was not strictly speaking an anthologist) Pound's. Palgrave's way involves culling the beauties, orphaning them from their context and presenting them for our admiration as occasions of pleasure. The anthologist retires, his taste is present mostly as a confirmation of current notions of 'good taste'. Pound's way is the opposite: the anthologist is more pedagogue than connoisseur, his taste is personal and often counter-cultural; he is concerned to establish contexts and to have his choice of poems read not just as isolated lyric moments but as the plot of a whole imaginative action.
>
> *GT*, loc. 785

Placed in conjunction with the arguments made above, a striking feature of this passage is Heaney's (casual) characterisation of the two kinds of anthologists described: the Poundian "pedagogue" and the Palgravian "connoisseur". Noteworthy too is the use of the narrative term "plot" as a component in the description of the Poundian anthologist's strategy, which effectively represents that anthologist as a storyteller of some sort: plot, after all, has to do with the ordering of the materials provided in a fabula, and is thus a narratological concept that spans the second and third layers of Bal's schema. Such connections indicate the possibility of combining Bal's narratology with Heaney's observation, but so far they remain largely intuitive; work must be done, therefore, to cement and clarify them.

My argument is that both *Soundings* anthologists are more Poundian than Palgravian. This, however, is to claim something more than that they are prone to didacticism, an impression which is anyway gleanable from the fact that both prefaces feature a number of declarative statements, as will be seen presently. It is to claim additionally that the *Soundings* prefaces, although not principally narrative texts themselves, invite readers to frame the poems they present as if they were events in a fabula. The anthologists tell stories about the poems, rather than about the anthology itself. As a result, they prompt a narrative interpretation of the poetry which can be explained by referring to Bal's exposition of the fabula within her narratology. More specifically, what matters here is the concept of the "narrative cycle", which Bal introduces as follows:

> A fabula may be considered as a specific grouping of series of events. The fabula as a whole constitutes a process, while every event can also be called a process, or, at least, part of a process...According to Aristotle as well as Bremond, three phases can be distinguished in every fabula: the possibility (or virtuality), the event (or realisation), and the result (or

> conclusion) of the process. None of these three phases is indispensable. A possibility can just as well be realized as not. And even if the event is realized, a successful conclusion is not always ensured.
>
> *SB*, 189

As I intend to demonstrate presently, both *Soundings* anthologists represent the activity of poetry writing as following just such a narrative cycle, with the completed poem itself occupying the position of the event. These poem-events, in turn, constitute a series, and therefore a fabula. In each anthology, finally, the fabula evoked is different, even if the basic operations inherent in developing it remain the same. This makes it necessary to discuss them individually.

In *Soundings 72*, the development of the fabula takes place in the penultimate paragraph. There the anthologist declares:

> In fact, what is interesting in this particular selection is the number of poets pushing back and out in a search for metaphor and material. Translations, versions, poems, that gesture toward old mythologies and sources are being written by a surprisingly large number of poets…Gary Snyder in California, George Mackay Brown on Orkney, Geoffrey Hill in the north of England, to name three influential writers outside Ireland, are all involved in a retrieval of ancestry, an attempt to shore up more than fragments against the ruins, an attempt to make poetry once again an act of faith in the land and language that the poet shares with his dead.
>
> *S2*, 6

In this highly metaphorical passage, contemporary acts of poetic writing across the northern hemisphere are perceived by the anthologist as somehow essentially similar to acts of searching, of retrieval, of preservation, and of faith. All of these are actions in which an actor attempts to realize a particular event. As a result, each metaphor in the series imagines contemporary acts of writing *narratively* by representing the poets as engaged in the execution of a task which, although ultimately difficult to pin down in terms of content (as Bal suggests, series of metaphors such as the above can "create the impression that the compared element is elusive and indescribable" (1997, 43)), is nevertheless putatively held in common by "a surprisingly large number of poets". Represented thus, the activities of these poets become variations of the same, generalised fabula: a quest to reconnect with their respective pasts, both linguistically (perhaps better: etymologically) and, as it were, topographically. This fabula is proffered as a frame through which to read each poets work, and should the reader accept, the poems will be read *as if* they were the realisation of its maker's wish to execute this quest. The interpretation, in other words, will reproduce Bal's "narrative cycle", although it might well leave out judgement of the result as a matter for evaluation (1997, 189).

In *Soundings 2*, the fabula enters through a different door: not a metaphor, but via a concept. Describing the selection, the anthologist states:

> *Soundings 2*…is more a personal culling of work by young poets, some of them more confidently and fluently at ease with their gift than others, but all of them, I believe, involved with poetry as an art. Their poems are neither expectoration nor exhibition but more or less disciplined explorations.
>
> Discipline is not synonymous with tidiness or perfect finish: it is more like an appetite for a technique… Technique is [the poet's] poetic personality, his natural accent, not a voice imitated from those poets who have influenced and educated him. Technique matures as the young poet discovers his proper subjects, as he gradually realizes that the self is all he has to work towards and out of.
>
> *S2*, 5

The application of the concept of technique necessarily entails a narrative component to any interpretation which ensues. This is due to the implication of narrative in the concept itself, which is demonstrable from the quotation above. Technique represents an ideal towards which, according to the anthologist at least, the young poets represented in the anthology aspire. It is on the basis of this aspiration that their work is collectively described as "disciplined". This provides the basic materials required for a fabula of (personal) poetic development: the poets, newly "involved with poetry as an art", aspire towards the epitome of technique in their poetry, and as such each poem becomes readable as the realisation of its maker's attempt to achieve that aspiration. Each poem is, therefore, narratologically speaking an *event* in the fabula of the poet's development. This, of course, is in many ways identical to what was said of *Soundings 72*, but with one crucial difference. In *Soundings 2* the fabula is principally *artistic*, insofar as it originates with a desire for a superior kind of poetry: the achievement of technique, as opposed to mere "craft". In *Soundings 72*, however, the fabula begins with a wish to reconnect with one's past, which is a more tribal-like, or communal desire. Whilst these differences might well collapse if we pursue further Heaney's conceptualisation of technique, to maintain them is nevertheless useful in distinguishing the two anthologies.

To identify the anthologists of the *Soundings* series as Poundian is, of course, not to characterise them in the same manner as is possible for *The Rattle Bag* and *The School Bag*, that is, by analysing their prefaces in isolation; as 'texts' first and foremost. Indeed, beyond the somewhat impressionistic equation of argumentative passages with a pedagogic character, it is extremely difficult to characterise the anthologists of the *Soundings* series by analysing their prefaces alone. This has led me to suggest, instead, ways in which paratextually-located stories can help to frame the texts they present as narratives. In this respect, the strategy of both *Soundings* is to establish a general

fabula and to present the poems as events within it, such that the reader is prompted to interpret them narratively. In effect, this is a translation of Heaney's 'Poundian' into the language of Bal's narratology. It anticipates the forthcoming chapter, by paving a way into a discussion of the relation between preface and poems. It is also clearly pertinent to the earlier brief discussion of Heaney's stepping stones metaphor which, I would argue, enacts the same strategy but on a much wider scale, transfiguring each poem and each volume into an event in Heaney's poetic, professional and personal development.

Chapter 2: The Poems

In this chapter the scope of the analysis is extended to include the selection and arrangement of the poems Heaney anthologised, as well various other peritexts included in each anthology. Unlike previously, this chapter is arranged into four sections, one for each anthology, and proceeds chronologically. In each case, a description of the contents and the way in which they have been organised is followed by a discussion of the interaction between the poems, the manner of their arrangement, and the anthology's various peritexts. Suggestions developed in the course of this discussion are demonstrated via close-readings of the anthologised poems themselves; these in turn serve as evidence of the effects of paratexts and arrangement, and thus of the anthologist's directive role in helping shape the reader's experience of the poems collected therein.

Soundings 72

Soundings 72, as the reader learns from the preface, collects "stuff written by poets born in Ireland" (*S72*, 6). Thirty-five poets are represented, the majority by only one entry, and all of them were living at the time of publication. As the reader soon gleans from the table of contents, the poems are arranged alphabetically according to poet's surname, and where more than one poem by a poet is included, alphabetically again by title. Cairan Carson, Pearse Hutchinson, Tom McLaughlin and George McWhirter provide three entries each, which is the most by which any poet is represented. A few others provide two. This last group includes Heaney himself, making *Soundings 72* the only anthology in which Heaney collected his own poetry: 'Mossbawn Sunlight', which would later be included in the dedication to Mary Heaney in *North* (1975), and the otherwise uncollected 'Sile na Gig' are the poems with which he chose to represent himself. Female poets are included, but only three: Eavan Boland, whose poem 'Botanic Gardens' opens the collection, Joan Keefe, and Eileen Ni Chuilleanain. As the reader learns from the 'Notes on Contributors' section located at the very end of the anthology, the poets represented were at various stages in their career at the time of the publication: some, such as John Hewitt and Thomas Kinsella, were fully established; others had published one or two collections of their own; still others had a scattering of poems in other anthologies and magazines; Trevor McMahon and William Pesket had yet to complete their undergraduate degrees (see 71-72). These observations permit the conclusion that neither age nor fame was considered a bar on selection. Nor, it should be added, was either an obvious factor in determining a poet's number of entries, since both Hewitt and Kinsella are both overtaken in this regard by Carson, McLaughlin, and McWhirter; all relatively young poets, McWhirter the only one amongst them who had published a collection.

The decision to arrange the poems alphabetically by poet's surname suggests authorship as the anthology's organising principle, thus making the poets themselves its central focus. This suggestion is corroborated elsewhere in the anthology by paratexts which emphasise the link between poet and poem, and also subtly privilege the former's importance as the maker of the latter. The poet's name, for example, is printed in capitals atop the first of his/her poems to appear, underneath which the poem's title is printed in smaller font according to regular punctuation rules. This produces a form of visual emphasis which draws the reader's attention to the poet as the author of the work. Also significant is the decision to begin a new page each time a new poet is introduced, since it reinforces the impression of sequences arranged according to a principle of authorship. New pages are not always begun, on the other hand, for new poems (see, for example, 50). Finally, various comments in the preface likewise direct the reader to the centrality of the poet within the anthology. These include explicit references to the determinant role of biographical details such as birthplace in the selection process, but perhaps the more effective directives are contained in comments like: "It might sooner be said that a writer has no country – every poet will sooner or later create his own country with its own language". This imputes to the poet an agency beyond that otherwise inferable from the existence of the poem, which necessitates only that the poet be recognised as a writer of verse. Composition becomes an activity meant, or at least capable of, achieving more than simply the creation of a poem, and thus is instrumentalised. The effect is a deflection of the reader's attention towards the consideration of what the poet writes *for*, as a result of which the poems will be read in relation to their makers. In respect to the poems themselves, the fact that they are all lyrics is likely to confirm readers who follow this approach, even if they have learnt not to confuse the 'I' of the poem with the actual poet.

The irony, of course, is that whilst *Soundings 72* theorises the agency of poets in ways that greatly increase the import of their activities, crediting their poetry with properties it might otherwise be denied, it is the anthologist who assumes responsibility for presenting the poems collected. Thus, whilst the poets are elevated in one respect, they are also denied what Graves and Rider see as their "right" to direct the reader's interpretation of their work (2002, 169). The ethical implications of this irony, professional or otherwise, do not concern me here, nor am I interested in searching for inconsistencies between the anthologist's claims for poetry and those made by the poets represented. Far more engaging are the practical questions that ensue once we begin to interrogate the relationship between preface and poems. How, for example, do the individual poems 'fulfil' or 'realise' the claims made of them by the anthologist? And how do their differences affect the reader's understanding of the claims made? These sorts of questions assume the actualisation of paratextual effects, and thus concede interpretive direction to the anthologist. At the same time, however, they raise the possibility that interpretation does not occur unilaterally from preface to poem and instead moves in both directions. Such a model maintains the agency of the poems themselves to reflect insight back upon

the theories used to interpret them, and thereby to complicate and sophisticate the reader's understanding of the very theories offered by the anthologist. This is what happens when reading *Soundings 72*.

John Hewitt's 'The Distances' and Pearse Hutchinson's 'Lyde' appear side by side just under halfway through the anthology (see 26-27 respectively). Even prior to reading, their differences are striking. The former comprises three quatrains separated by stanza breaks, and occupies only the top left hand quarter of the page. The latter, however, is made up of thirty-seven lines consisting of roughly twelve syllables each, meaning that most of the page is taken up by type. Upon reading, the only similarities that appear immediately are their common lack of rhyme, the seasonal setting, and the lyric subject. Hewitt's speaker narrates a memory of "driving…in August dusk" in an unspecified place, whilst Hutchinson's narrates in the present the experiences of an early July morning in Lyde, Gloucestershire.

In relation to the preface, we might say that the image of the poet creating country through language translates more simply into 'Lyde'. Self-described as a "rude suburban", the use of archaisms and colloquialisms ("the pottle", "sozzled", "mingily") amidst descriptions of rural scenes remind the reader of the mediating function of the speaker's perception and language in relation to the world. This, in turn, is exacerbated by occasional interruptions of the otherwise seamless occurrence of perception and its narration by conscious thought, as when we read:

> …squirrels, birds, a rumor
>
> of antlers back there, somewhere, in the dense woods, for
>
> a thrill – easy? cheap? Things ought to be easy and cheap
>
> once in a while, even often, like this peace here
>
> given to me by friends, watching the sun make over
>
> the long narrow water, the trees – I name those I know:
>
> beech, alder, ash, elm (all vowels alliterate)…
>
> *S72*, 27

Considerations of possible adjectives, as well as reflections on the phonetic capacities of language itself, demonstrate the potential of language to refract vision, and thus to produce images of the world coloured, as it were, by the poet's (or speaker's) consciousness.

In 'The Distances' a very different creation of country is performed. The distances referred to in the title are identified in the final quatrain as "the distances/of loneliness", and are interpretable as the distances travelled in between the three encounters narrated. Each of these is narrated in a separate quatrain, with the first two running as follows:

Driving along the unfenced road
in August dusk the sun gone from
an empty sky, we overtook
a man walking his dog on the turf.

The parked car we passed later
its side lights on, a woman
shadow in the dark interior
sitting upright, motionless.

S72, 26

The distance separating the man and the woman is not explicitly mentioned, but is nevertheless inferable from the fact of driving and the temporal interval indicated by "later". A simple equation, distance = speed x time, is all it takes to deduce that a distance has been travelled by the subject. Upon doing so, moreover, it becomes immediately possible to locate where on the page this (undeterminable) value is expressed: the stanza break. The transition from the first stanza to the second, represented on the page by empty space, comes to stand for the otherwise unspoken distance traversed by the subject in between the two encounters, such that "the distances of loneliness" are expressed through structure rather than language. This, I would argue, results in poetry of country utterly distinct from that represented by 'Lyde', but equally creative. The sparsity of language describing the land ("unfenced road" and "the turf" are the only geographical markers Hewitt's

speaker provides) is in completely contrast with the vivid, adjective-heavy descriptions of Hutchinson's poem, yet this is offset by the supremely evocative use of blank page to express the loneliness of the place travelled. The double-page thus presents the reader with two utterly different realisations of "soundings", one abstract, the other conspicuously realist, prompting a return to that metaphor freshly enlivened by a sense of its manifold possibilities.

An extremely effective director of interpretation, the preface to *Soundings 72* nonetheless does not bring about the homogenisation of the poems it presents. Recalling the previous chapter's analysis, we might say that the general fabula evoked to unify the selection has the almost paradoxical effect of highlighting the variances between the poems rather than their similarities. Accepting that the *Soundings 72* poets are engaged in a common task ultimately serves to emphasise their idiosyncrasies in the pursuit of that task, as each poem presents a new variation on the general plot. As a result, the reader completes the anthology with a new sense of the significance of the plural *soundings*: not only are multiple soundings taking place across Ireland and, indeed, the northern hemisphere, but each sounding is unique.

Soundings 2

Soundings 2 anthologises almost as many poems as its predecessor, but far fewer poets: it features just fifteen contributors, who between them contribute forty-five poems in total. This means that the maximum number of poems supplied by any one poet has increased. Dermot Healey, whose poems appear first, is represented by twelve, whilst Harry Clifton takes second place with six; those remaining, meanwhile, provide between one and four each. Several poets represented in *Soundings 72* are represented here also, and once again those represented are disparate in terms of age and achievement. In spite of this, however, it is clear that *Soundings 2* favours a particular demographic over others: the preface describes the issue as a "culling of work by young poets" that is "concentrated on less established writers" particularly, whilst it is typically the younger poets – Healey and Clifton, for example - who contribute more. *Soundings 2* also abandons both the alphabetical ordering of the poets and of the poems provided by each. Indeed, insofar as I am able to discern the ordering of both is random, although the fact that the poems are grouped by poet means *Soundings 2* continues its predecessor's use of authorship as an organising principle. This is likewise reflected by those paratextual features which are continuous across both issues, such as the capitalisation of the poet's name and its use as a header. Such typographic similarities are to be expected in a series, and mean that much of what was said about *Soundings 72* is applicable to its successor. In the interest of avoiding repetition, however, this section focusses primarily on those features that are distinctive of *Soundings 2*.

The major differences between *Soundings 72* and its sequel originate in its preface. Much like the previous gloss of 'soundings' as "an activity" that "implies a notion of geographical limits and of exploration of depth within those limits", the preface's description of "technique" provides an interpretation of the series' title which, in turn, can direct the reader's interpretation of the anthology's contents. *Soundings 2* therefore introduces a new dimension to the word 'soundings', which is related but not identical to that furnished by its predecessor. It also describes this dimension in far greater detail than seen before, or, put another way, whilst *Soundings 72* provided a "notion", *Soundings 2* offers a *concept*. The distinction concerns the precision with which each will direct interpretation. Bal defines concepts as "miniature theories" that "help in the analysis of objects, situations, states, and other theories" (2002, 2). Since we can reasonably assume that the more developed a theory, the more it will dictate the terms of an analysis in which it is applied, the fact that *Soundings 2* conceptualises technique to a greater extent than *72* does its "notion" suggests that more detailed interpretive direction is being supplied. This is not to say that interpretation becomes an easier or mechanical activity, but rather that more preliminary interpretive work is done by the anthologist than previously. The poems are presented, in other words, more definitively; the reader provided with more sophisticated scaffolding from which to begin working on the poems.

According to the preface, each poem anthologised in *Soundings 2* is a "disciplined exploration", or an attempt by the poet to discover and achieve technique. In the previous chapter's analysis, I elucidated the fundamental *narrativity* inherent in this concept, and concluded that one of its effects was to trigger a narrative framing of the poetry. The reader is invited to perceive each poem as an event in the fabula of its poet's development; a stepping stone on the path towards artistic maturity. Although this means that all the poems are instrumentalised in a common way – that is, as a tool for poetic self-development – it also means the reader is able to read more fruitfully the entries of those poets represented by more than one poem. In those cases, the appetitive pursuit of technique is made visible as a series of experiments in which the poet balances variation and continuity in order to discover and explore the forms, structures, themes and language that realise his/her technique. Accepting the anthologist's assurances that each poem is "authentic", and therefore a successful exploration, the poet is imagined exploring the range of possibilities that suggest themselves in the course of "disciplined" composition. According to the concept of technique, these possibilities will not be accidental in cases of technically successful poetry, but rather 'naturally' determined by factors peculiar to the poet in question: "accent", "personality", "proper subjects", "the self" and so forth (S2, 5). The possibilities for technically successful poetry are, in other words, theoretically limited by their putatively natural connection to the poet; within the range they provide, however, experimentation is of course possible.

In order to suggest how this might translate into an actual reading of the poetry, I have opted for a sustained consideration of Dermot Healy's contributions to the anthology, which make up just

under a quarter of the total. Although my comparison describes the relations between Healy's contributions primarily in terms of structure, this should not be taken as the only grounds for doing so. They are simply the most visible, being the product of the poem's specific configuration on the page. They serve, moreover, as a useful starting point from which to begin drawing the collective similarities and differences that exist within the group, and from there to engage in interpretations that adopt the narrative framing proffered in the preface.

I contend that the repetition of particular structural features across poems that are otherwise distinct serve as indicators of the experimental activity described above. An isolated line falling after a stanza break is, for example, a structural feature common to a number of the poems. Its possible effects, however, are not similarly consistent, but are rather subject to inflection by other features peculiar to the poem in which it is deployed. An illustration can be drawn from the first canto of 'some small comments', which reads:

i.

sitting up with

you late into the

night, is like having

a good head

for heights.

S2, 10

These five lines have the feel of an aphorism, even if the comparison they draw is somewhat opaque. The effect of the stanza break is to interrupt the idiom that constitutes the simile, and thereby to focus attention upon it. Unthinking interpretation of a normally familiar phrase is consequently obstructed, making what at first glance appears an everyday comparison ambiguous. This contributes to the aphoristic impression created by the canto, by leaving the reader unsure as to the profundity of its lines. Crucially, however, it is clear that whatever emphasis is produced by the break, its reverberations are felt within the canto solely. Moreover, although visually severed from the four preceding, the final line remains coordinated with the rest of the canto.

Neither of these observations is applicable to the first stanza break in ‘nightfishing’, which begins:

i.

leaving the pub early, putting

the bottles on board, we cut a long

arc of silence through the lake

the waves running up our arms

S2, 11

In this poem, although the first canto is structured similarly to those of ‘some small comments’, the aphoristic impression has been substituted for that of the vignette. This is true for the canto as a whole, but also for its final line: “waves running up our arms” functions as an independent image in a way that the coordinated “*for* heights” cannot. The effect of the emphasis produced by the break is different as a result: the evocative potential of the individual line is increased, whilst its severance from the lines that precede it serves as a visual cue for its independent interaction with other cantos. This, of course, proves fruitful in a poem in which “the up and down/of the water” functions as a lodestone of the experience it narrates (*S2*, 11). Looking to the second canto, the antithetical relation between it and the first’s final line illustrate such interaction:

ii.

the flat water closed over

the moon and the hollow moon sank

below the clouds, far off

S2, 11

Both the flatness of the water and the direction of "moon and hollow moon" (itself an image of reflection) are reversals of the earlier image of the upward-running waves. Such parallelisms form connections that bridge the separations otherwise designated by the canto - a feature absent from 'some small comments', the cantos of which are more self-contained. This difference, of course, is also suggested in their respective titles: 'some small comments' furnishes an expectation of discrete verses identified for their dimensional and generic properties, whilst 'nightfishing' anticipates a poem about a temporally-situated, imperfective activity – in other words, a narrative. Thus, differences in the poems' form contribute to the different effects produced by the stanza break.

Different again is the effect of the same structural feature when deployed at the very end of 'Silent Verse', in which the speaker narrates its perception of "two age old friends…sitting tight-lipped" on a bench (*S2*, 20). After having witnessed the pair rise "in quiet acquiescence", the final, severed line of the poem concludes that they leave "having left nothing unspoken" (*S2*, 20). A summative commentary on the action that preceded it, both the communicative function of the severed line and its relation to the rest of the poem are unlike those seen in the previous two examples. In terms of effect, the line is striking for its contradiction of the earlier stanzas, which forces the reader to consider how to interpret both it and earlier lines. Stanzas that might otherwise be read as a witness's account of watching two companions sat in silence are imagined as the record of prolonged, thorough, yet entirely nonverbal communication between the two. Although the speaker is confident in his assessment of what he is watching, the signs by which the two communicate, and by which the speaker knows them to do so, are never made explicit. As a result, a disparity is registerable between the information explicitly provided within the narration, and the information available to the speaker: either the speaker sees more than he tells, or what he tells contains signs that are only implied, leaving readers to try discover and determine them themselves. Either way, the effect of the emphatic, final line is to make the reader aware of a deficit in his/her understanding of that which transpires between the companions.

Highlighting these differences helps to show how a feature common to a number of Healy's contributions nevertheless produces effects unique to each. The narrative framing proposed in the preface provides a means of making sense of such continuities and differences, inviting the reader to treat them as potential signs of a consistent poetic "self" and of probing that self's possibilities respectively. Repetition with a difference across poems is, of course, perceptible only when a poet is represented by more than one poem, and also becomes more salient when perceptible over a larger series. Both of these observations are relevant to *Soundings 2*, which represents some poets substantially more than it does others: Healy and Clifton's technique, and therefore their poetic personalities, are showcased far more extensively and from more angles than John Montague's, for

example, who is represented by only one contribution. Though a minority (only four poets contribute only one poem), such cases are noteworthy for permitting only a blinkered insight into the technique of the poets in question.

Comparisons between poems by a single poet are not the only type possible when reading *Soundings 2*, but they are certainly more likely to occur when reading this anthology than its predecessor. This is both a statistical fact and a consequence of the stress placed by the concept of technique on the individuality of poets, each of which is imagined forging his/her unique path and personality by means of poetry. In light of this, and being pressed for space, I have decided to forgo a practical demonstration of a comparison between two contributors to *Soundings 2*, and hope that some small comments on the matter will suffice. If when reading *Soundings* 2 comparisons are made between poems by different poets, these are again likely to be conducted with the poets principally in mind. The equation of technical successful poetry with personality means comparisons are likely to be geared towards the discernment of idiosyncrasies which may, in turn, be taken as signs of a distinctive poetic "self". The metaphorical equation of technique with "accent", moreover, which is a more communal identity marker than "personality", provides the basis for signifying comparisons which yield positive correspondences. Clearly, however, whichever angle is followed the reader remains guided in his/her approach to the poems by distinctly authorial considerations.

In the next chapter, *Soundings 2* will be treated in conjunction with its predecessor, as a result of which the relation between the two dimensions of 'soundings' will be clarified. For now, however, we leave the *Soundings* series, moving to an analysis of the *Bag* anthologies.

The Rattle Bag

The Rattle Bag is a far larger anthology than either of the *Soundings*. In total, one hundred and thirty seven poets are represented by four hundred and twenty nine poems. If we add to this figure the fifty-two poems whose makers are anonymous, the total number of poems anthologised is four hundred and eighty one. Also unlike its predecessors, *The Rattle Bag* anthologies more dead poets than alive, with roughly only a third still living at the time of the work's publication.

The anthology is organised alphabetically by poem title or, in cases in which a title is not readily available, by first line. The anthologists call this order "arbitrary", a description which Ferry interprets as a sign of the anthologists' wish to make their "guiding presence…disappear" (2001, 35). Arguing for the impossibility of this desire, she goes on:

> Paradoxically, the supposedly arbitrary (by which the poets seem to have meant unideological) order is itself an idiosyncratic choice, like many of the poems selected, and, like them, calls attention to the anthologists doing the choosing.
>
> 2001, 35

Whilst I largely agree with this latter argument, Ferry's initial interpretation is inadequate. The anthologists explicitly declare their hope that the choice of arrangement will allow "the contents to discover themselves as we ourselves discovered them – each poem full of its singular appeal, transmitting its own signals, taking its chances in a big, voluble world", and in doing so assert themselves as a guiding presence (*RB*, 19). *How* they propose to guide the reader is, however, unusual, for as the previous quote also indicates, the anthologists offer their experience of compilation as a model for the effects they hope the anthology will achieve in its users. The experience of reading the anthology, in other words, is meant to mimic the experience of its making, which is communicated to the reader via narrative. This reaffirms the benefits of the narratological analysis enacted in the previous chapter, and prompts a renewed look at the *character* of *The Rattle Bag*'s preface. By reflecting the disposition encouraged by the preface in its readers, the character of the preface's story can help to realise the anthologists' aim of guiding the reader by providing him/her with an archetype. As well, remembering *The Rattle Bag* anthologists' childlike, excitable characteristics, a new sense of "arbitrary" suggests itself: not "unideological", but rather "capricious, uncertain, varying" (*OED*). Signified thus, the description of the arrangement extends to it the characteristics exhibited by the preface's narrator. The resultant symmetry can, I believe, give the appearance of credibility to the anthologists' hope that their chosen order will somehow replicate in the reader the experiences communicated in the preface.

Before moving on to a consideration of several of the anthology's selections, some final interpretive directions can be suggested. Both the anthology's title and the final image of the preface encourage an approach that privileges attention to sound. The title is supplied by Dafydd Ap Gwilym's eponymous 'The Rattle Bag', a Welsh poem from the fourteenth century which appears in the anthology translated by Joseph Clancy (*RB*, 354-355). Descriptions of such a bag ensue when the poem's speaker finds his courting of a "sweet girl" rudely interrupted by the sound of a shepherd's:

Noisy pouch perched on a pole,

Bell of pebbles and gravel

Saxon rocks making music

Quaking in a bullock's skin…

RB, 355

Named after a rudimentary musical instrument comprising pebbles in a sack, *The Rattle Bag* is identified primarily for the noise its contents make. This could act as a cue for the reader to *listen;* a suggestion only reinforced by the image of "the big, voluble world" of poetry that the anthology claims to make manifest, which once again accentuates the phonetic qualities of the contents. Complementing the encouragement of an aural approach is the relative absence of information which might trigger other ways of reading the poetry. Details that could aid in the historical interpretation of the poetry are, for example, kept to a minimum: their dates of publication are withheld, and although most of them are signed, the poet's date of birth and (where applicable) death is restricted to the index located at the back of the anthology (*RB,* 479-494). Finally, the preface's emphasis on "individual poems", which is reproduced subsequently in the affirmation of each entry's "singular appeal", could direct the reader to attend to their peculiarities, prompting special attention to their (aural) differences.

Posing once again the question the interaction between the paratextual effects enumerated above and the poems anthologised, Dafydd Ap Gwilyym's aforementioned entry provides a prime case with which to begin. Not merely a description of a rattle, the poem itself (or at least, its translation) rattles, making Saxon music of its own by its frequent use of kennings and alliteration. Hearing the sound of the "harsh-horned sag-cheeked rattle", the speaker exclaims:

By Christ, no Christian country,

Cold hard tune, has heard the like.

RB, 355

As well as exhibiting such salient features of Anglo-Saxon verse, the assonance produced between *Christ/like, Cold/country* and *hard/heard* exemplify this as an extremely 'noisy' poem, and therefore one capable of yielding much to a phonetic approach.

Invariably, however, 'The Rattle Bag' causes the reader to ask questions about the anthology to which it gives its name. The relationship between aesthetics and sound, for example, comes under scrutiny if we consider the speaker's judgement of the rattle's, and compare it to the image of "the soft voiced", "splendid maiden":

And then, cold comfort, it came,

A blare, a bloody nuisance,

A sack's bottom's foul seething

From an imp in shepherd's shape…

RB, 354-5

A contrast is immediately recognisable between the speaker's perception of the maiden and the shepherd-player: the former, an object of desire, is beautiful; the latter, ugly and therefore despised. The two poles of aesthetic judgement are represented in the poem itself, producing a distancing effect that enables the reader to reflect upon his/her own acts of judgement regarding the aesthetics of poetry. This, of course, is an effect intensified by the fact that the poem itself is named after the ugly-sounding instrument, and since the anthology likewise shares that name, we are encouraged to consider what role aesthetic appreciation may or should play in the reception of its contents.

The Rattle Bag is, I contend, an anthology that asks its readers to listen *to* sounds rather than *for* beauty. It is, therefore, one which departs from a long tradition of anthologies dedicated to collecting – to quote the opening sentence of Palgrave's *The Golden Treasury* – "all the best original lyrical pieces and songs in our language…and none besides the best" (1861, Preface). It privileges diversity of sound over conformation to a specific aesthetic ideal, and moreover refuses to compose, or orchestrate, the notes that result, opting instead to follow the alphabet. Compare this to Palgrave's claim that *The Golden Treasury* was modelled on "the symphonies of Mozart and Beethoven", and one will perceive the extent to which *The Rattle Bag* departs from aesthetic ideals in its pursuit of - for want of a better word – noise (1861, Preface).

Owing to the number of poems included, it is impossible to demonstrate the anthology's full range; illustrations can be drawn, however, by examining the poems' titles. As mentioned, in cases where no title is available the anthologists use the first line (there are eighty-one such entries or 17% of the total). When this occurs, speech marks are included both within the contents table and above the printed entry. These marks remind the reader that the poem is voiced, and therefore 'audible'. The anthology's very first entry, "Adieu, farewell earth's bliss" (Thomas Nashe, 21), exemplifies this practice, whilst its position means that readers are ushered into the anthology by a poem paratextually presented as an oration. A number of other titles include explicit references to either speech or music, such as 'Baby Song' (Thomas Gunn, 56), 'He Hears the Cry of the Sedge' (W.B. Yeats, 185) and

‘Sounds of the Day’ (Norman MacCaig, 404). Titles like Theodore Roethke’s “Mips and ma the mooly moo” (290) and Adrian Mitchell’s “Autobahnmotorwayautoroute” (52), meanwhile, explicitly privilege sound over grammatical or syntactical norms. Such samples provide a broad sense of the noisiness of *The Rattle Bag*, granting insights into both the sounds made by the poems and those that they describe.

The size of *The Rattle Bag* means that any demonstration of its arrangement’s effects on a phonetic reading of the poetry can make audible only a minute fraction of those that are achieved. Nevertheless, it seems a shame not to provide one. ‘Bog Face’, a twentieth century poem by English poet Stevie Smith, is printed just above Alfred Lord Tennyson’s “Break, break, break”. Both are odes: Smith’s is addressed to “Dear little Bog Face”; Tennyson’s exhortation to the sea’s waves to break against “grey stones” and “crags”. Their comparison reveals partial correspondences in terms of rhyme and stanza structure: both are comprised of quatrains that follow an *ABCB* scheme. ‘Bog Face’, however, also rhymes across its two quatrains, such that the scheme of all eight lines runs *ABCB DAEA*. This is not the case in Tennyson’s poem: consisting of four quatrains, the only repeated rhyme occurs across the first and last stanza; the rhyme is identical, moreover, being sounded by *Sea-me*. An elegiac poem that laments both the passing of time and the death of friends, the tone struck by “Break” is both melancholy and mature, with the speaker thematising the sounds of children at play as a contrast to its own sadness:

O well for the fisherman’s boy,

That he shouts with his sister at play!

[…]

But the tender grace of a day that is dead

Will never come back to me.

RB, 85

This is in stark contrast to Smith’s poem, with its childlike, monosyllabic opening stanza in which the speaker remains innocently blind to the darker implications evoked by its rhetorical questions. Comparing the following with the repeated ‘O!’ apostrophes of Tennyson’s poem, the variety of ‘o’ sounds produced might perhaps strike the reader:

Dear little Bog-Face

Why are you so cold?

And why do you lie with your eyes shut? –

You are not very old.

RB, 85

One could go on in this manner for a while, after which another four hundred and seventy nine poems lay waiting to be sounded. This provides a sense of the seemingly endless range of aural possibilities which *The Rattle Bag* invites its readers to activate; in the interests of brevity and the reader's concentration, however, I will not labour the point by pursuing the demonstration further. When we return to *The Rattle Bag* in the final chapter, the importance of so simple an aural approach to poetry to Heaney's conception of his role as a teacher of poetry will be explored, as will its role in his own critical practices.

The School Bag

Similar in terms of page count, *The School Bag* nevertheless anthologises substantially fewer poems than its predecessor: two hundred and seventy poems are collected, fifty-three of which are of anonymous origin, whilst the other two hundred seventeen are each composed by a different poet. From a geographical perspective, the selection of poets appears limited to the British Isles, Australia, New Zealand and North America only, although some English translations of Latin and Ancient Greek texts are included, for example Arthur Golding's translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* III (*SB,* 145). Linguistically speaking, however, *The School Bag* remains extremely diverse due its extensive historical range, which spans roughly fifteen hundred years. Translations from Old English, Scots Gaelic, Irish, and Welsh are all included, whilst poems written in Middle English and Scots are deemed accessible enough to be printed in the original. The earliest poem, translated from the original Irish by Thomas Kinsella, is dated to before the sixth century (*SB,* 505), whilst the most recent were published in 1988 (Charles Causley's 'Eden Rock', Allen Cunrow's 'Continuum' and 'What is the Word' by Samuel Beckett: *SB*, 274; 298; 452). The intervening years are represented by an uneven distribution which strongly favours twentieth century poetry (roughly 35% of the total), and less so that of the nineteenth and seventeenth centuries (roughly 14% each), but which at least ensures that at least one work from every century is included.

This anthology, the reader learns in the preface, is "a school book in the usual sense – the poems, for example, are grouped in ways that invite different kinds of historical and thematic reading." Paratextually, this reading is facilitated by the inclusion of dates at the bottom of each poem, and occasionally by the titles of the poems: an anonymous Old English poem 'Ice', for example, ushers in a sequence of poems united by a fairly conspicuous seasonal theme, as indeed titles such as 'A Song of Winter', 'March' and 'Somer is i'comen in' indicate (*SB,* 112-116). More often than not, however, titles alone are insufficient to identify such groupings; instead, they become visible in the course of actual reading. Different readers may well perceive different correspondences between the same poems, just as the same reader may perceive something different coming back to a poem a second time. The groupings which form in the act of reading are, in other words, a function of interpretation. As such they are not necessarily immutable or universally perceptible, even if they do not often appear especially subtle. Nor are they discrete: in my reading experience, at least, a poem perceived as the last in a unified sequence has parallels with the poem following it, potentially initiating a new sequence the seeds of which may even be discovered further back in the anthology. The result is an enlivening pursuit of correspondences backwards and forwards through the anthology, with groupings forming and falling away as the reader becomes increasingly alert to the manifold possibilities of association between the poems. Familiarity with the anthology, finally, only increases these possibilities, as the reader begins to discover correspondences which ultimately transcend the consecutive ordering of the poetry. As this hopefully makes clear, the invitation proffered in the preface is to engage in an activity that the anthologists, although its artificers, do not ultimately control.

My practical demonstration of this experience isolates three perceived groups within the arrangement, each of which is analysed individually in order to evince the various claims made above. The first of these groups is probably the first which a reader new to *The School Bag* will perceive, and runs from the anthology's second poem until its thirteenth, or from the anonymous sixth century Irish poem 'Adze-head' until Edwin Morgan's 'The Unspoken', published 1968. The grouping occupies thirty-seven pages (*SB,* 4-41), and is unified by a common geographical setting: all twelve poems are connected by the sea. Read chronologically, the experience of the previous poem inflects that of the next, such that both positive and negative correspondences are perceived and seized upon. Matthew Arnold's 'Dover Beach' (1853), for example, is positioned just before Elizabeth Bishop's 'At the Fishhouses' (1955). Both poems are spoken at the water's edge, the speaker looking out to sea; how that experience is translated into poetry, however, as well as the effects it has upon the speaker, are noticeably different. Arnold's speaker is preoccupied primarily with sight and sound, whilst in Bishop's poem vision is murky, the scene experienced most directly by the nose:

…on the French coast, the light

Gleams, and is gone; the cliffs of England stand,

Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.

[…]

Listen! you hear the grating roar

Of pebbles…

Matthew Arnold, 'Dover Beach',

SB, 4

Although it is cold evening,

down by the fishhouses

an old man sits netting,

his net, in the gloaming almost invisible,

a dark purple-brown

and his shuttle worn and polished.

The air smells so strong of codfish

It makes one's nose run and one's eyes water.

Elizabeth Bishop, 'At the Fishhouses'

SB, 5

Such differences pervade the two poems, and yet it is striking that both speakers are moved by the sea to contemplation of an abstraction. Whereas Arnold's speaker hears in the waves "the eternal note of sadness", moving climactically towards the melodramatic declarations of the final stanza: "we are here as on a darkling plain/swept…" (*SB,* 5), Bishop's likens the "clear, gray icy water" to "what we imagine knowledge to be" (*SB,* 7). As poetic records of experience, the two poems illustrate

consciousness' capacity to be moved in very different directions by a common object. They also attest to poetry as a medium for preserving individual visions of a world experienced differently by all.

The meditative form of poetry exemplified by Arnold and Bishop is soon succeeded by the more dramatic example of Coleridge's 'Rime of the Ancient Mariner' (1798), which takes the reader offshore aboard the Mariner's cursed vessel. This in turn is succeeded by another long poem: a translated excerpt from Alasdair MacMhaighstir Alasdair's Scots-Gaelic poem 'Clanranald's Galley' (18th century). Written at a similar point in history, the reader is invited to compare two narrative poems which tell a similar fabula (the hardships of a ship at sea) in their own unique way. Alasdair's poem concludes with a safe return to harbour, and is succeeded by the four-line, anonymous, ninth century Irish verse 'The Viking Terror'; an onshore poem in which a (presumably) native inhabitant of Ireland draws comfort from the storm brewing out to sea: "Tonight I fear not the fierce warriors of Norway/Coursing on the Irish sea" (*SB,* 35). Linked to its predecessor, 'The Viking Terror' also anticipates George Mackay Brown's subsequent 'The Stone Cross' (1976), which is delivered from the perspective of the captain of a Viking raiding party:

> At dawn Havard sighted a hill in Ulster
>
> 'A point to west,' said the helmsman. 'There the hive is.
>
> There is the barren kingdom of drones.'
>
> George Mackay Brown, 'The Stone Cross'
>
> *SB,* 36

In this instance, the most immediate comparison is between two speakers of opposing communities, which may trigger the reader's consideration of language's role in producing and shaping the perception of otherness. Once again, direct correspondences are perceived between adjacent poems that, together with others, constitute part of a larger sequence that develops over time. With each poem linked to all the others by an overarching theme – here, the sea – and to those adjacent in different ways either side, the result is a grouping that gives the impression of linearity.

A more non-linear yet no less unified grouping is the sequence running from John Crowe Ransom's 'Captain Carpenter' (1927) to T.S. Eliot's 'The Hollow Men' (1925), which comprises poems drawing on conspicuously Christian themes of sin, damnation, death and redemption (*SB,* 173-204). Whilst parallels between adjacent poems are certainly perceptible, this grouping also yields

correspondences that cut across the order in which it is arranged. For example, Judith Wright's 'Eli, Eli' (1949), the Old English 'The Dream of the Rood', Robert Southwell's 'The Burning Babe' (1602), Patrick Kavanagh's 'The Great Hunger' (1942) and Eliot's 'The Hollow Men', which are the fourth, sixth, eighth, eleventh and twelfth poems in the series, are all either wholly or partially classifiable as visionary poems. Similarly, James Baxter's 'The Maori Jesus' (1969), the tenth poem, links up with 'Eli, Eli' and Kavanagh's 'Hunger' through its presentation of a twentieth century Christ-figure, which in turn can be pursued back to the Rood's prosopopoeic account of Christ's crucifixion in 'The Dream'. Comparing the fifteenth century lyric 'Adam lay ibounden' to R.S Thomas' 1961 poem 'Here' (fifth and seventh respectively),meanwhile, illustrates the historical endurance of questions of divine forgiveness and retribution as themes for poetry, which also provides a link to the excerpt from Act V of Christopher's Marlowe's 'The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus' (1588); the second in the sequence. As these examples illustrate, the connections established between poems in a group do not only follow a linear pattern, producing instead a web of associations between poems otherwise distinct in terms of historical, cultural, geographical, and linguistic situation.

My final grouping is also the final one of the anthology, and begins with Wallace Steven's 'The World as Meditation' (1954). Drawing on Homer, this poem represents Penelope's wait for her husband's return as perennial; an event expected but endlessly deferred. Its final line, "Never forgetting him that kept coming constantly so near" (*SB,* 513), articulates the curious admixture of past, present and future inherent in the activity of waiting for something to return, and in doing so blurs the separation of the tenses. Time thus problematized, Stephen Spender's subsequent 'The Truly Great' (1933) valorises those who "from the womb, remembered the soul's history", declaring that "what is precious, is never to forget/the essential delight of the blood drawn from ageless springs" (*SB,* 513). John Marston's 'To Everlasting Oblivion' (1598) considers the posterity enjoyed by deserving poetry; Thomas Hardy's 'Afterwards' (1917), the posterity of character in the memories of those the speaker knew, whilst the speaker of Emily Dickenson's 'Because I could not stop for death' (1863) steps into Death's "Carriage" and thus outside of time, enjoying "immortality" on a journey towards and through "eternity" (*SB,* 514-516). The anthology's final verses are excerpted from John Dryden's 'The Secular Masque' (1700), in which the chorus concludes:

Tis well an old age is out

And time to begin a new.

SB, 517

Clearly unified by preoccupations with time, memory and posterity, this final grouping is well-suited as the finale to a book that claims to represent the "notes and strains that have gone into the making of the whole score of poetry in English" (*SB,* xv). It hardly seems accidental that the chorus' forward look to a new age concludes an anthology published on the brink of a new millennium, nor is the reader likely to miss the relevance of poems concerned with memory and immortality to a collection which exhibits the poetic output of the past fifteen hundred years.

The final group does the work of what Ferry calls "framing poems" (2001, 51); poems placed at the beginning and end of a series which function as thresholds, defining its boundaries, maintaining its shape, and determining how it is perceived by the reader. As such, it bears peculiarly strong traces of the anthologists' manipulation of arrangement. Not coincidentally, the same can also be said for the anthology's opening poem, W.B. Yeats' 'Long-legged Fly' (1939). This poem stands apart on two counts: for failing to link up with the sea-grouping discussed previously, and for being printed on the right page of a double-spread, with no poem adjacent. It exhibits a conspicuous relationship with the anthology as a whole, however, through its weaving of links between three distinct moments in Western history, each of which is represented in a separate stanza. Thus the military campaigns of "our master Caesar", the life of Helen of Troy and Michael Angelo's painting of the Sistine Chapel are connected by, for example, the refrain

> Like a long-legged fly upon the stream
>
> His mind moves upon silence.
>
> *SB,* 3

By way of repetition, structural unity of the three stanzas is achieved, whilst the refrain's content imagines identity between the three represented moments. By thus establishing transhistorical connections, 'Long-legged fly' constitutes a microcosm of the effect of the anthology's arrangement.

The School Bag is unique amongst the anthologies considered here for exhibiting so designed an arrangement, and therefore bears a much clearer imprint of its makers' mark than the others. This accords with the previous chapter's assessment of the anthology's pedagogic character, and also produces an undertone of irony to the image of the book as a "listening post…where the reader can tune in to the various notes and strains that have gone into the making of the whole score of poetry in English" (*SB,* xv). Although this score is presented as an independently-existing phenomenon and the anthology merely an artificial threshold designed to allow the reader to experience it, the anthologists

orchestrating role in composing and conducting this score is undeniable. In this sense, *The School Bag* is clearly analogous to Palgrave's symphonic *Treasury*, whilst its anthologists are more embracing of their authorial role than those of *The Rattle Bag*. In the upcoming chapter, finally, *The School Bag* will be considered in relation to Heaney's oftentimes frictional encounters with certain groups operating in the literary academy, and as potentially conducive to the education of students in the historical sounding of poetry.

Chapter 3: Heaney's Anthologies

This chapter moves finally to interpret the anthologies by placing them in conjunction with his work in other genres, principally his prose and poetry. The possible significance of perceived associations between the anthologies and other aspects of Heaney's life and opus is suggested, even as the model of interactive, bilateral framing is maintained. The hope is that sense will be made of the anthologies, and also that the anthologies will provide fresh perspectives on both the prose and the poetry. As before, the chapter proceeds chronologically, but it treats the *Soundings* series in one section rather approaching each edition individually.

Heaney's *Soundings* series

Concluding the preface to *Soundings 72*, Heaney writes:

> Out of the depths too comes the monster, and how with this rage shall beauty hold a plea? I am tired of speculations about the relation of the poet's work to the workings of the world he inhabits, and finally I disagree that 'poetry makes nothing happen'. It can eventually make new feelings, or feelings about feelings, happen, and anybody can see that in this country for a long time to come a refinement of feelings will be more urgent than a re-framing of policies or of constitutions.
>
> *S72*, 6

As a paratext, this final paragraph constitutes a threshold for passing into the poetry it presents, yet it is also clearly a threshold for moving between the work and the world into which the anthology, upon its publication, both entered into and participated within. The preface therefore helps to situate the work, inviting a framing that takes into account contemporary conditions and events. Whilst details about its nature are not explicitly provided, for readers of the anthology at the time of its publication Heaney's monster would have been all too familiar. 1972 was the most violent year of the Troubles, with nearly five hundred lives lost; two thousand explosions and an average of around thirty shootings a day (see McKittrick and McVea, 2001, 83). Atrocities were committed by all sides of the conflict, including the British army, most notoriously on Bloody Sunday; Irish Republicans, in their case most notoriously on Bloody Friday; the Unionist government in the form of vicious security measures such as internment and special interrogation techniques, and finally various loyalist paramilitary groups such as the UDA and UVF.

1972 also witnessed the fall of Stormont, the parliamentary stronghold of the Unionist (and therefore majority Protestant) establishment which had ruled Northern Ireland uninterrupted since the partition of Ireland in 1920. A major blow to both groups for "involving", as McKittrick and McVea observe, "the demise of the institution which they regarded as their chief bulwark against nationalists and republicans", this event ushered in a period of direct rule by the British government during which a new parliamentary system was devised (2001, 81). It is tempting to read Heaney's mention of "re-framing policies" and "constitutions" as a reference to this process, in which case his somewhat slighting remarks concerning its relative lack of urgency are oddly prescient. Direct rule was certainly fundamental in helping to develop a new system based on power-sharing between major parties, and also resulted in unprecedented official acknowledgement of 'the Irish dimension' within Northern Ireland; the idea that the independent Republic located to the south had legitimate interests in the north, and that therefore nationalist aspirations on both sides of the Northern Irish border had to be recognised in any future arrangements. The collapse of the Sunningdale agreement in 1974, however, meant the failure of Northern Ireland's first attempt at actualising these ideals; "a unique constitutional experiment which had taken almost two years of hard work to construct, but which survived for only five months" (McKittrick and McVea, 2001, 105). That the deal's collapse was brought on by the refusal of both Republican and Unionist hardliners to accepts its terms, as well as by its more general unpopularity with the majority of Northern Irish Protestants, indicates that progress in the political sphere was impossible without comparable progress in levels of social and cultural cohesion between the different groups. This, as I intend to show in the forthcoming paragraphs, constituted a central motivation driving Heaney's output in the 1970s. As such, it also constitutes a framing motivation for the *Soundings* anthologies.

In 1974, the year of *Soundings 2*'s publication, Heaney gave a lecture at the Royal Society of Literature entitled 'Feeling into Words'. Its very title recalls the passage with which I began, whilst the lecture itself yokes together the constituent elements of the narrative framings developed in the two anthologies, that is, Heaney's concept of technique and his image of poetry as a search for and retrieval of the past. As such, the lecture is invaluable in helping to connect the two anthologies, as well as to understand Heaney's assertion that poetry "can make new feelings happen". It begins with an evaluation of the exemplariness of Wordsworth's *The Prelude* for Heaney's own poetry:

> Implicit in those lines is a view of poetry which I think is implicit in the few poems I have written that give me any right to speak: poetry as divination, poetry as revelation of the self to the self, as restoration of culture to itself; poems as elements of continuity, with the aura and authenticity of archaeological finds, where the buried shard has an importance that is not diminished by the importance of the buried city; poetry as a dig, a dig for finds that end up being plants.

P, 41

Heaney's image of poetry as archaeological excavation, as becomes clear from Aleida Assman's *Cultural Memory and Western Civilisation* (2011), is traceable back to Sigmund Freud, who deployed a similar metaphor in order to represent the work of the psychoanalyst (see Assman 2011 150). Like Heaney, Freud understood his profession as tasked with the retrieval and reconstruction of "things that seem completely forgotten" but are in fact "present somehow and somewhere, and have merely been buried and made inaccessible to the subject" (qtd. 2011, 151). In respect to this task, the excavation metaphor generates insight by "introducing the concept of depth into memory theory", which in turn "entails [the] inaccessibility and unavailability" of certain aspects of a subject's past (2011, 151). With the right tools, both Freud and Heaney suggest that these depths can be plumbed and explored; that therefore what seemed lost is potentially retrievable. For Freud, these tools were furnished by psychoanalysis. For Heaney, poetry itself could serve.

Discussing 'Digging', the opening poem of his first volume *Death of a Naturalist* (1966), Heaney observes that "it was the first poem I wrote where I thought my feelings had got into words…the first place where I felt I had done more than make an arrangement of words: I felt that I had let down a shaft into real life" (*P*, 41). As the lecture proceeds, it becomes clear that the phrase 'feeling into words' is in fact largely synonymous with 'technique', making 'Digging' Heaney's first technically successful poem; his first poem, that is, in which his own 'disciplined explorations' paid off. He had until that point been engaged in what he calls "craft", or "the skill of making":

> Learning the craft is learning to turn the windlass of poetry. Usually you begin by dropping the bucket halfway down the shaft and winding up a taking of air. You are miming the real thing until one day the chain draws unexpectedly tight and you have dipped into waters that will continue to entice you back. You'll have broken the skin on the pool of yourself. Your praties will be 'fit for digging'.
>
> At this point it becomes appropriate to speak of technique rather than craft.

P, 47

Though it transposes the poet's excavation from land to the water well, the image of the poet at the windlass nevertheless introduces the same concept of depth as the digging metaphor. Like the digging metaphor, it is developed in *Death of a Naturalist*, more specifically in its final poem, 'Personal Helicon':

> As a child they could not keep me from wells

And old pumps with buckets and windlasses.

[…]

I savoured the rich crash when a bucket

Plummeted down at the end of the rope.

[…]

…I rhyme

To see myself, to set the darkness echoing.

DN, 44

As realised in this particular poem, the image of the poet at the windlass is also more recognisably akin to Heaney's metaphor of poetry as 'sounding', a term which names the action of measuring the depth of a body of water using a lead line. Like the windlass and the digging metaphors, therefore, 'sounding' denotes a concept of poetry as a tool for retrieving and restoring forgotten things that will otherwise remain hidden deep below the surface. The success of this enterprise is, moreover, itself a marker of technique as opposed to craft. Insofar as all the *Soundings* poems represent "the real thing" rather than simply mime it, therefore, they are all examples of technically successful poems, and in that guise achieve "the revelation of self to self" and the "restoration of culture to itself".

Through successful acts of retrieval "new feelings, or new feelings about feelings", can happen. Heaney confirms this when he says of 'Digging':

> The facts and surfaces of the thing were true, but more important, the excitement that came from naming them gave me a kind of insouciance and a kind of confidence…[the poem] had surprised me by coming out with a stance and an idea that I would stand over.

P, 42

Many years later, in conversation with Dennis O'Driscoll, Heaney would reiterate this idea that acts of poetic recollection are themselves inherently productive, saying:

> The amount of sensory material stored up or stored down in the brain's and the body's systems in inestimable. It's like a culture at the bottom of a jar, although it doesn't grow, I think…unless you find a way to reach it and touch it. But once you do, it's like putting your hand into a nest and finding something beginning to hatch out in your head.

SS, loc.1371

Heaney reached and touched this 'culture' using poetry, and so credited it for making "an order where we can at last grow up to that which we stored as we grew" (*OG*, 450). The idea is also confirmed by Assman, who views both the existence and the accessibility of presently forgotten material related to an individual or society's past as essential preconditions for the possibility of "cultural renewal and change" (2011, 130). She calls this form of temporarily-forgotten memory 'storage memory', identifying it as the counterpart to 'functional memory'. The latter is "highly selective and only gives presence to a fraction of memory's contents"; its elements are "chosen, interpreted and appropriated", so that "functional memory makes a political statement and profiles a distinct identity" (2011, 125; 130). "Storage memory", on the other hand, "is the 'amorphous mass' of unused and unincorporated memories that surround the functional memory like a halo" (2011, 125). It constitutes:

> An important reservoir for future functional memories…If the borders between functional and storage memory remain permeable, elements can be exchanged, patterns of meaning can be altered, and even the general framework can be restructured.

2011 130

Poetry, conceptualised as a means of crossing the threshold between functional and storage memory, is thus for Heaney a means of ensuring their border's permeability. As such, it ensures the possibility of change and renewal on both personal and cultural levels, achieving this by bringing forgotten memories to the surface so that they might trigger a fresh configuration with elements already present within functional memory.

Overlaying this concept of poetry onto the *Soundings* anthologies, each collected poem becomes empowered to bring about change precisely through their common activity of sounding. The level on which this change occurs is different in each, however, for whereas *Soundings 72* frames its poets' activities as (we might say) 'tribally' motivated, *Soundings 2* is more personally, or professionally so. The *Soundings 72* poets are thus more communal figures, their soundings probing the depths of a collective memory in order to bring about change on cultural level, whilst the *Soundings 2* poets are more introspective, engaged in soundings that are primarily private rather than public. All, however, can be seen as engaged in the production of new feelings, and thus as active, constitutive participants in a process of development. For Heaney, this was a general function of (technically successful) poetry, and thus not one pertaining solely to poets with personal experience of the Troubles. Clearly, however, it is also a function that takes on especial significance when framed by such violence, meaning that readers may view differently those *Soundings* poets either born or living in Northern Ireland in the early 1970s. The collected poetry of Seamus Deane, Cairan Carson, John Montague, John Hewitt and, of course, Seamus Heaney - to name but a few - is thus more likely

to be viewed as striving to bring about change in the conditions of the North, although of course a number of those anthologised that were born in the Republic (Eavan Boland, for example), also engage with the Troubles in their work. How they can be said to do so will vary from poet to poet, in accordance with the previous chapter's conclusion that each *Soundings* poem realises the narrative framing provided in different ways. Each poet *sounds* after their own fashion, in other words, even if the underlying mechanics and effects of the operation are held in common.

Such arguments suggest how inclusion within Heaney's *Soundings* ascribes agency to the poems themselves, yet I also want to argue that the anthologies *as a whole* constitute a response to the Troubles that is distinct from and therefore not reducible to the sum of responses delivered by its parts. This response is, I contend, analogous to the ideal that Heaney desired for his own poetry, and which he thought was realised in the best work of others: poetry as "a working model of inclusive consciousness" that does "not simplify", but is rather "a match for the complex reality which surrounds it and out of which it is generated" (*RP*, 8). Introducing his translation of the old English long poem *Beowulf*, Heaney celebrates the original for "[answering] perfectly the early modern conception of a work of creative imagination as one in which conflicting realities find accommodation within a new order" (*B*, xviii). Eugene O'Brien, meanwhile, has shown in *Seamus Heaney and the Place of Writing* (2002) how Heaney's own poetic soundings of the names of places he calls home realise this ideal in their acknowledgement of such places as interwoven by self and other simultaneously (see 2002, 33). Of the Scots, English and Gaelic etymologies and phonologies that constitute his personal voicing of the word 'Mossbawn', for example, Heaney comments: "in the syllables of my home I see a metaphor of the split culture of Ulster" (*P*, 35). Recognising the other within his very home, Heaney's reaction is not to purge but rather to acknowledge his own split identity as one "symbolically placed between the marks of English influence and the lure of the native experience, between 'the demesne' and 'the bog'" (*P*, 35). This, in turn, reflects his hope that his poetry "will be adequate to my whole experience" as opposed to merely a part (*P*, 37).

The *Soundings* anthologies represent poets born on different sides of the Northern border; some into Protestant families, others into Catholic ones; some male, some female; some young, some old; some still living in their place of birth, some that have migrated. As such, they conform to Heaney's ideal of inclusion over exclusion. The work they do, moreover, is directly contrary to that enacted by terms like 'Ulster Protestant' and 'Irish Catholic', both of which Heaney explicitly rejects in 'Feeling into Words'. Heaney's accusation that the "psychology and mythologies" implicit in such terms are "bankrupt" stems from the way in which they yoke together and so imaginatively achieve the "total integration" of "place and race" (*P* 57; O'Brien 2002 39). O'Brien explains the dangers of this inherently nationalist tendency as follows:

> The enculturation of place as "home"…is rife with dangers and with notions of violence. Notions of historical, cultural, religious, and ethnocentric homelands are often invoked and reified to create a form of social imaginary which then becomes a position of fixity. They serve as transcendental signifiers under whose rubric "self" is valorised in terms of a motivated connection with place (home) and in contradistinction with the other. From this perspective, violence toward those who are not part of "our" centre of identity can be perpetuated, and ethnic cleansings…justified.
>
> 2002, 38

In response to such exclusionary signifiers of identity, and in a manner analogous to the best poetry, the *Soundings* anthologies constitute non-exclusionary, composite images of 'reality' as a phenomenon that is perceived differently depending on one's perspective. Any notion of an identity between 'reality' and the way in which it is perceived by an individual or group is thus subverted. In much the same way, the observation: "It might sooner be said that a writer has no country – every poet will sooner or later create his own country with its own language" enacts a transition away from the monolithic ideal implicit in the sense of country as a national 'homeland' towards a pluralist ideal of space as capable of accommodating different 'countries', or images of country, simultaneously. This, of course, in no way denies the connection between person and place, but it does interrupt any claim of precise, exclusive identity between the two. Interpreted thus, the anthologies represent a counter-ideal to those otherwise driving the Troubles violence. They outline an "imagined standard"; "the dream of an alternative world" that is more admissive of otherness and thus more true to the reality of Northern Ireland than either of the worlds promised by purveyors of bankrupt nationalisms (*RP*, 1). They serve, in other words, as evidence of Heaney's "persistent attempt" to "imagine a new, more peaceful and inclusive region" in the North of Ireland (Russell 2014, 15).

To conclude our discussion of Heaney *Soundings*: it is possible to view them in two different but nevertheless complementary ways. The first, and perhaps more readily apprehensible way is to view them as a means by which Heaney extended his personal poetics so that they might be applied also to the work of his contemporaries. If in the previous chapter this activity was understood as a form of experimentation in which poetics and poems frame and thereby generate insight into one another, this section has demonstrated the agency which Heaney's poetics ascribe to poetry as a developmental tool. Treating the anthologies in this manner figures them as confirmations of Cavanagh's diagnosis of Heaney as "someone who wants to influence how poetry is thought about"; a "professor", therefore, as well as a poet (2010, 6). It is also possible, however, to view the anthologies as "creative works of imagination" in and of themselves, and thus to draw analogies between the anthology as a whole and the genre of poetry as theorised by Heaney. Both ways demonstrate

Heaney's *Soundings* as works which engage with the conditions of the world, whether that be through their framing of the poems they present, or through the facts of their inclusion.

Heaney's *The Rattle Bag*

In the first part of the *Finders Keepers* essay 'On Poetry and Professing', originally delivered as a lecture titled 'The Chair in Leaf', Heaney counsels against the wholesale abandonment of faith in art's potential to do good in response to the suffering witnessed in the twentieth century. Though it is true, he concedes, that the humanist fiction of art's civilising potential is undone by the fact that "some of the most cultivated people in a most cultivated nation could authorize mass killings and attend a Mozart concert on the same evening", yet he insists that "if it is a delusion to expect poetry and music to do too much, it is a diminishment of them and a derogation to ignore what they can do" (*FK*, loc. 1389). Following this is a definition and defence of poetry that resonates strongly with my previous reading of *The Rattle Bag*:

> 'Sounds and sweet airs, that give delight, and hurt not': that, as a description of the good poetry and of literature in general, will do. It is not required that the experience of the sounds change Caliban into another kind of creature, or that it have a carryover effect upon his behaviour. The good of literature and of music is first and foremost in the thing itself and their first principle is that which William Wordsworth called…'the grand elementary principle of pleasure', the kind of pleasure about which the language itself prompts us to say, 'It did me good'.
>
> *FK*, loc. 1401

The expressed "excitement" that went into *The Rattle Bag*'s compilation, the way in which the anthology is explicitly disidentified with stuffy-seeming genres like "lists", "textbooks" and "surveys", and of course the characteristics exhibited by the anthologists in their narration, all suggest the work as one designed, first and foremost, to 'give delight' (*RB*, 19). Its manifest advancement of a phonetic approach to poetry, meanwhile, heightens the resonance between *The Rattle Bag* and the comment above, helping to clarify the anthology as one which advances that "particular good" which Heaney thought was also the "function of university chairs…to promote" (*FK*, loc. 1402). This suggests a significant relation between Heaney's work as *The Rattle Bag*'s anthologist and his work as an educator, the nature of which it is the task of the next few paragraphs to explicate.

In his role as a 'poet-professor', Heaney proved unswervingly committed to the view that "poetry is its own reality and no matter how much a poet may concede to the corrective pressures of social, moral, political and historical reality, the ultimate fidelity must be to the demands and promise

of the artistic event" (*GT*, loc. 2051). In *Preoccupations*, Heaney affirms such in the essay 'In the Country of Convention', a review of the 1975 *Penguin Book of English Pastoral Verse*. Identifying the editors' approach with that elaborated by Raymond Williams in *The Country and the City* (1973) - a study which sought to call the "bluff" of orthodox literary criticism by asking "what the country was really like" rather than re-enacting the "habit of tracing" literary "influences" **(**1985, 3**)** – Heaney suggests that whilst

> This sociological filtering of the convention is a bracing corrective to an over-literary savouring of it as a matter of classical imitation and allusion, it nevertheless entails a certain attenuation of response, so that consideration of the selected poems as made things, as self-delighting buds on the old bough of tradition, is much curtailed. The Marxist broom sweeps the poetic enterprise clean of those somewhat hedonistic impulses towards the satisfactions of aural and formal play out of which poems arise, whether they aspire to delineate or to obfuscate 'things as they are'.
>
> *P*, 174

Although *The Rattle Bag*'s 'arbitrary' alphabetical arrangement effectively renders invisible "the old bough of tradition", the image "self-delighting buds" recalls the "singular appeal" of poems which the anthology was designed to amplify, whilst the "hedonistic impulses" of its anthologists have already been much discussed. Such correspondences suggest *The Rattle Bag* as in certain respects Heaney's answer to the academic movement represented by the 1975 *Penguin Book*, which in turn represents the anthology as informed by the position taken by Heaney in debates over the norms and standards of literary criticism. As such, the anthology can be read as an extension of Heaney's use of prose as a means to engage with contemporary developments in the literary academy.

Theorising the political dimension of academic disciplines, Stanley Fish offers as a model the concept of "interpretive communities", the constituents of which "share interpretive strategies not for reading (in the conventional sense) but for writing texts, for constituting their properties and assigning their intentions" (1980, 171). Being neither "natural or universal, but learned", the interpretive strategies, the common practice of which constitutes a given community, must be successfully communicated to subsequent generations of students if a given community is to persist (1980, 172); otherwise, a different set of strategies will be executed, and a new interpretive community will form. Fish's theory renders the performance of particular interpretive strategies a politically significant act in and of itself, regardless of whether a position relative to others is consciously assumed or no. By executing this set of interpretive strategies rather than others, a practitioner becomes identified with a particular interpretive community, consolidating and maintaining it in the process. Similarly, by encouraging that set of interpretive strategies in others, one contributes to the perpetuation of a particular community, possibly but not necessarily at the expense of others.

As attempts to discredit or marginalise the practices exhibited by other groups in order to present in a better light those advocated by the practitioner in question, both Williams' challenge to the old guard of literary criticism and Heaney's counter-movement against the caricatured wielders of Marxist brooms are, of course, rather explicit examples of academic politics in action, and as such are thoroughly comprehensible within Fish's theory. The encouragement of interpretive strategies need not be so forthrightly combative, however, as in fact is demonstrated by my previous interpretations of *The Rattle Bag*, an anthology which eschews explicit position-taking on the disciplinary-political spectrum, but which nevertheless proves effective in triggering the execution of interpretive strategies that cohere with Heaney's expressed ideal for literary study. To confirm this, one need only recognise the continuity between the phonetic approach to poetry encouraged by *The Rattle Bag* and that which Neil Corcoran identifies as a hallmark of Heaney's own criticism: "the physicality of his ear…the way, precisely, in which the contour of a meaning is traced within the pattern of a rhythm…a rhyme, or even, indeed, an etymology" (1998, 224-5). Although *The Rattle Bag* alone would prove insufficient to inculcate this particular style in its readers, it advancement of *listening* as the first and foremost means of approaching poetry means that it offers the groundwork necessary to follow in Heaney's critical footsteps. Its restriction of material that might otherwise be used to make sense of the poems, meanwhile, can be read as the anthology's suppression of interpretive strategies other than those it is designed to promote.

As Oxford University's Professor of Poetry, Heaney returned to the lectern to stake out once again an explicit position in respect to disciplinary politics. Having declared in his inaugural lecture that "poetry cannot afford to lose its fundamentally self-delighting inventiveness, its joy in being a process of language as well as a representation of things in the world" (*RP*, 5), Heaney responded to certain perceived trends in literary criticism as follows:

> We have been forced to cast a suspicious eye on the pretensions of Renaissance humanism…we have been rightly instructed about the ways that native populations and indigenous cultures disappear in the course of these civilising enterprises, and we have learnt how the values and language of the conqueror demolish and marginalise native values and institutions, rendering them barbarous, subhuman, and altogether beyond the pale of cultivated sympathy or regard. But even so, it still seems an abdication of responsibility to be swayed by these desperately overdue correctives to a point where imaginative literature is read simply or solely as a function of oppressive discourse, or as a reprehensible masking.
>
> *RP*, 23

As the language of this passage suggests, by the last decade of the twentieth century Heaney's comprehension of the threat posed to his ideal for literary criticism had been transfigured by his growing familiarity with postcolonial and postmodern paradigms and registers. In and of itself, this

provides evidence of the effects of academic politics by attesting to the way in which new theories and ideas concerning literature are disseminated within, taken up and reproduced by members of the academy. The emerging hegemony of a particular way making sense of literature, in other words, is manifested in changes in Heaney's diction. That these are perceptible at the very moment that Heaney was seeking to modify the overall direction of the new theories, meanwhile, only serves as further evidence of those theories' pervasiveness. Besides this, the passage simultaneously indicates Heaney's ongoing commitment to the pleasure principle and bears traces of his efforts to remain so in the years intervening between *Preoccupations* and *The Redress*.

The tension between "song" and "suffering" to which Heaney argued in *The Government of the Tongue* "all artists were susceptible" is clearly likewise experienced by the professor of *Redress*: it is what leads him to claim that critics, like poets, have *responsibilities* (*GT*, loc.56). Granting the gains made by new theories for our understanding of literature's (mostly negative) effects in the world, Heaney implicitly accepts that new approaches have enabled critics to more effectively fulfil their responsibility towards 'suffering'. Yet, he argues, they are in danger of failing to fulfil another "imperative": "to redress poetry *as* poetry, to set it up as its own category, an eminence established and a pressure exercised by distinctly linguistic means" (*RP*, 5). In terms of the binary sketched in *The Government*, this represents a desertion of 'song'. Heaney's phrasing, moreover, is strikingly similar to Derek Attridge's question of whether we can "do justice to literature *as literature* when the institutions within which we engage with it – as teachers, student, researchers, and critics – exert constant pressure on us to treat it instrumentally – to reduce it to a set of rules, or a source of information, or a deployment of skills?" (2015,111). Although probably accidental, the immediate echo is far from coincidental, since both Attridge and Heaney are engaged in the same enterprise: to frame literary criticism as an activity entailing ethical considerations, the nature of which should govern the behaviour of critics.

To a certain extent, of course, the assertion of an ethical relationship between the critic and object is just one more rhetorical volley in the academic-political standoff: figuring a particular activity as a 'duty' can, given the right audience, produce a strong response that accords with the speaker's ideals. A less cynical reading would, however, recognise in Heaney's exhortations of the (clearly ethical rather than natural) *necessity* of finding a way "to treat the marvellously aspiring notes" of poetry a desire to provide a positive motivation for doing so (*RP*, 22); an advancement on his strategic critique of Williams' approach, which points out deficiencies in others but bears comparatively little evidence of self-examination. In this respect the analogy with Attridge is instructive, since it helps to elucidate the content of Heaney's ethical challenge to the would-be 'responsible' critic.

Redressing poetry *as poetry* and doing justice to literature *as literature* are activities which require the critic to approach an object *as itself* rather than try to convert it into some other thing; what Attridge calls "the supremely difficult ethical act of responding to the singularity and otherness of the unique instance – whether person, act, or text – while bringing to bear on it, without merely *applying* them, all the general laws and norms which constitute both it and the judging discourse" (2015, 116). Understood thus, responsible criticism is "an impossible, though always necessary act":

> The text is other, and our reading of it can be said fully to do justice to it only to the extent that it's a response to that otherness (most readings, inevitably, are exercises in converting otherness to sameness); but there's no way we can represent that otherness, to ourselves or to anyone else, without contaminating it with, or rather without finding it *already* contaminated by the same.
>
> 2015, 115

To both Heaney and Attridge, the seeming critical penchant for treating poetry solely as 'oppressive discourse' (Heaney) or as an exemplification of "the operation of ideology" (Attridge) represents a dereliction of responsibility, as critics consistently interpret individual poems using general theories that make no concessions to their uniqueness, and thus by extension to their intrinsic otherness (2015, 112). Although Attridge recognises that a complete reversal of this irresponsibility is impossible, he treats said impossibility as the ultimate limit defining the possible rather than as an excuse not to pursue responsible criticism in the first place. If some conversion to sameness is inevitable, in other words, it falls to the critic to minimise as much as possible the extent of that conversion.

In his essays on Marlowe, Merriman, and MacDiarmid in *The Redress,* to name but a few, Heaney applies an interpretation of John Keats' "notion that poetry surprises by a fine excess" in order to suggest how these and other poets' work exhibits "a general gift for outstripping the reader's expectation, an inventiveness that cannot settle for the conventional notion that enough is enough, but always wants to extend the alphabet of emotional and technical expression" (*RP,* 36). By isolating and presenting various moments of excess, Heaney seeks to demonstrate poetry's ability to exceed pre-existing conditions which, he argues, are constitutive but not wholly determinant of the poem in question. Truly successful poems, therefore, are not separable from the manifold contexts of their creation, yet neither are they exhausted by them. Their very uniqueness and principal power resides, moreover, precisely in those aspects which are not the product of external determinations, but are rather potentiated by the writing process itself, the ideal movement of which is:

> From delight to wisdom and not vice versa. The felicity of a cadence, the chain reaction of a rhyme, the pleasuring of an etymology, such things can proceed happily and as it were autistically, in an area of mental operations cordoned off by and from the critical sense.

> Indeed, if one recalls W.H. Auden's famous trinity of poetic faculties – making, judging and knowing – the making faculty seems in this light to have a kind of free pass that enables it to range beyond the jurisdiction of the other two.
>
> *RP*, 4

Giving oneself over to such artistic imperatives enables the poet to "get further back and deeper than [he/she] knew [the poem] would", whilst "being nevertheless still ready to go with it, to rise to the rhythmic and rhetorical occasion" (*RP*, 36). In other words, it renders moments of excess possible. Engaging in a reciprocal act of listening, as Heaney does, allows the critic to hear these moments, and thus to tap into that which is special and unique about the poem *as poetry*, and not as some other thing. It therefore constitutes an attempt at ethically responsible criticism, as argued for by Attridge.

To be sure, Heaney's reworking of the Keatsian notion of excess is only one of several arguments made in support of poetry in *The Redress*, but it is one that helps shed light on his comment on *The Rattle Bag* in *Stepping Stones*:

> Even if it was a book that kicked its heels, it was still more deeply devoted to educating people in poetry than many a textbook meant for the classroom. Too many of those take the pupils' supposed interests rather than poetry itself as the guiding principle…But one of the gifts of poetry is to extend and bewilder, and another is to deepen and give purchase…*The Rattle Bag* granted poetry its ad hoc, one-off, poem-by-poem life.
>
> *SS*, loc. 7633; 7644

A clear echo of the preface's directive to experience "each poem full of its singular appeal, transmitting its own signals", this comment reaffirms Heaney's belief in the need for students to develop an ethical relation to poems, such that they grant to each its uniqueness. For a poem to bewilder, it must be recognised as *other*. This suggests that part of *The Rattle Bag*'s project was to confront the reader with the unexpected, perhaps in order to develop his/her cognisance of that experience as essential to poetry. The fact that its very selection and arrangement appears geared towards fostering a sense of the differences between the poems rather than attempting to present a unified image and definition of the genre reinforces this interpretation, for as I argued in the previous chapter, both aspects function to privilege *noise* over conformation to a particular, monolithic ideal of *beauty*. To this we can now add that learning to attend to the diversity of poetry's sounds surely constitutes a vital step on the path towards being permanently attuned to the poem's uniqueness, making *The Rattle Bag* comprehensible as an attempt to instil in readers a habitual relation to poetry more in line with Heaney's own; an ethical relation, as part of which the strangeness of individual poems is not only experienced, but valued in and of itself.

Heaney's *The School Bag*

In the second part of 'On Poetry and Professing', which was originally written for *Poetry Ireland Review*, Heaney fleshes out in greater detail his idea of the 'poet-professor'. One passage in particular bears significance in relation to *The School Bag*:

> Poets are also more likely to attest without self-consciousness to the living nature of poetic tradition and to the demotic life of 'the canon'. Nowadays, undergraduates are being taught prematurely to regard the poetic heritage as an oppressive imposition and to suspect it for its latent discriminations in the realm of gender, its privilegings and marginalizations in the realm of class and power. All of this suspicion may be salutary enough when it is exercised by a mind informed by that which it is being taught to suspect, but it is a suspicion which is lamentably destructive of cultural memory when it is induced in minds without any cultural possessions whatever. On the other hand, when a poet quotes from memory or from prejudice or in sheer admiration, 'the canon' is manifested in an educationally meaningful way. To put it simply, I believe that the life of society is better served by a quotation-bore who quotes out of professional love than by an 'unmasking'-bore who subverts out of theory.
>
> *FK*, loc. 1433

In part a reiteration of the positions discussed in the previous section, this passage is nevertheless useful for making apparent several vital points. First and foremost, Heaney's advocation of the poet-professor's value depends upon a particular understanding of professional literary study's social function. Not only does Heaney believe that such study is socially valuable – an obvious point, perhaps, but one worth making explicit nonetheless – but in this passage at least he measures that value according to two functions. The most important is the transmission to the student of the "poetic heritage"; a collection made up of "cultural possessions" which in turn help constitute his/her "cultural memory". The other function, acknowledged by Heaney but about which he appears ambivalent, involves the critique of those same possessions through a consideration of their complicity in the maintenance of the societal status-quo. In his estimation, literary study "nowadays" risks foregoing the first of these functions thanks to its preference for theories designed for executing the second - a historically contingent diagnosis the causes of which have already been discussed. The poet-professor, precisely due to his superior (and indeed putatively natural) efficacy in "manifesting the canon in an educationally meaningful way", is thus offered as a counterbalance to the activities of regular professors, too many of whom (it is suggested) have lost sight of their ideal role as transmitters of cultural memory. In effect, this recommendation of the poet-professor operates in partnership with the representation of that figure as the affirmer of Wordsworth's "grand elementary principle": for Heaney, in other words, the proper transmission of poetic heritage required the affirmation of 'song', whilst the latter helped guarantee the former. *The Rattle Bag*, therefore, is

engaged in the transmission of cultural memory, yet I contend that *The School Bag*, by virtue of a variety of its distinctive aspects, bears more evidence of being tailored to that very purpose.

Before coming to those aspects, however, I want to draw attention to an impossible claim made by Heaney: the minds of modern students are "without any cultural possessions whatever". The collective signification of objects, practices, places and events – a provisional definition of the process of enculturation that nevertheless suffices for present purposes – is, hypothetically at least, a universal and indeed constitutive feature of human societies. To claim that any member of a society is entirely bereft of cultural possessions is, therefore, patently absurd. What *is* possible, however, is that new objects (practices, etc.) replace old ones as the bearers of cultural meaning, or that new meanings are attached to the same objects, dislodging their earlier significance. When Heaney declares that students today are bereft of cultural possessions, what he really means is that the cultural significance of poetry is changing; that poems are no longer being taught and thus received in the same way as "cultural possessions", and that therefore their potential role as facilitators of cultural memory is being undercut. Understanding why Heaney thought this to be the case as well how he sought to counter it through his own performances as a poet-professor are the tasks of the next few paragraphs.

The following quotation is taken from Heaney's poem 'Bone Dreams':

II

Bone-house:

a skeleton

in the tongue's

old dungeons.

I push back

through dictions

Elizabethan canopies

Norman devices,

the erotic mayflowers

of Provence

and the ivied Latins

of churchmen

to the scop's

twang, the iron

flash of consonants

cleaving the line.

N, 19-20

The narrative image developed in these stanzas represents the (let us say Derry-accented) speaker voicing the phrase 'bone-house' before commencing a journey back through the evolution of the English language to its roots in the Old English, pre-11th century poet's, or "scop's", consonant-heavy, alliterative verse. Read thus, the stanzas represent Heaney's take on T.S. Eliot's idea of 'the auditory imagination', which he explains in 'Englands of the Mind' as:

> 'The feeling for syllable and rhythm, penetrating far below the conscious levels of thought and feeling, invigorating every word; sinking to the most primitive and forgotten, returning to the origin and bringing something back', fusing 'the most ancient and civilised mentality'. I presume Eliot was thinking here about the cultural depth-charges latent in certain words and rhythms, that binding secret between words in poetry that delights not just the ear but the whole backward and abysm of the body; thinking of the energies beating in and between words that the poet brings into half-deliberate play; thinking of the word as pure vocable, as articulate noise, as symptom of human history, memory and attachments.

P, 150

By representing the backward movement from 'civilised' to 'primitive' levels, 'Bone Dreams' also frames that movement, thereby helping to make sense of it. The first and fourth stanzas are linked by the repetitive stressing of the consonantly-inflected, heavy 'o' sounds of, for example, "*bo*ne-*ho*use", "skele*ton*", and "*ton*gue"; "*sco*p", "ir*on*", and "*con*sonants". These mark, as it were, the beginning and end points of the auditory imagination's trajectory, with the echo that forms between them mimicking the putative activity of "bringing something back". The passage between these points, however, is not

straightforwardly linear, as the auditory imagination registers along the way associations with the "diction" of 16th century, Elizabethan poetry, as well as with the literary "devices" that entered into the conventions of English poetry following the Norman conquest of Anglo-Saxon England in the 11th century. Through these last, moreover, a detour is made via the originally-Continental poetic tradition of courtly love to the Latin-speaking missionaries of the Roman Catholic Church. Though these are the only associations mentioned by explicitly, it is clear that countless more proliferate: the courtly love convention, for example, encompasses the works of such canonical figures of European literary history as Chaucer, Dante, and Thomas Malory, whilst Heaney himself identifies the Anglo-Saxon *Beowulf* poet as a Christianised "Englishman looking back at places and legends that his [Germanic] ancestors knew before they made their migration from continental Europe to their new home on the isle of the Britons" (*B* xvi). The stanzas thus provide an image of the highly complex, shifting and comprehensive movement of auditory imagination, which reaches out and associatively connects poems that are diverse in terms of theme, genre, style, language, period and place of origin, and no doubt much else besides.

The resemblance between the activity of auditory imagination as imagined in 'Bone Dreams' and the effects of *The School Bag*'s paratexts and arrangement is, I suspect, unmissable. As an anthology that encourages the associative linking of poems composed across the British Isles and throughout their literary history, *The School Bag* habituates the reader to making transhistorical, transregional, trans-linguistic and genre-spanning comparisons that are themselves reminiscent of the workings of the auditory imagination. This becomes further apparent if we consider some examples of that imagination in Heaney's own criticism. Of Hugh MacDiarmid's 'A Drunk Man Looks at the Thistle', for example, he observes:

> Towards the end of the poem you can hear the reassuring democratic measure of the ballad stanza; but you can also hear something more stately and deeply orchestrated. There is a stereophonic scope to the music, as if the *gravitas* of the medieval Scots poet William Dunbar were echoing within the stellar reaches of Dante's *Divine Comedy*.
>
> *RP*, 112

In 'Sounding Auden', similarly, Heaney "sounds" Auden's poem 'Spain', establishing a connection with, first, Wilfred Owen's 'Strange Meeting'; subsequently, the sonnet that Walter Ralegh addressed to his son (*GT*, loc.2286; loc.2297). As these quotations suggest, for Heaney poetry was not simply an instrument of 'sounding', it could also be *sounded*. As a metaphor for critical activity, 'sounding' extends the concept of depth to the activity of reading itself, figuring it as a journey back into what Heaney calls the "hinterland" of poetry; a region in which "informing, influencing voices" that have been "'modified in the cuts of living'" can be heard (*P*, 175). This suggests that for those with the ears to hear, a new poem will be experienced as a node within an aurally-constituted network; connected

by lines of communication to other poems written at different times, in different places and, by extension, in response to different phenomena and events. The auditory imagination follows these lines, and thereby discovers relationships between poems which might otherwise have remained hidden. As realised by Heaney, therefore, Eliot's concept theorises a form of interpretive activity that is spurred by aural echoes and dissonances between poems, and which uses these as the basis upon which to develop oftentimes unexpected and surprising comparisons. What ensues, in other words, is a comparison motivated first and foremost by a perceived aural relationship rather than, for example, the recognition of historical or generic contiguities. This is not to say that interpretations guided by the auditory imagination relegate such contiguities to insignificance, but rather that, in such cases, these contiguities do not constitute the ground *for* comparison in the first place.

The School Bag's arrangement acts as a substitute for the working of the auditory imagination. It therefore does for the reader the work that for Heaney is enabled by his incredibly well-tuned ear. It triggers the kind of comparisons typical of that imagination, but uses themes rather than sounds as its primary organisational principle. *The School Bag*, therefore, is not an image or an example of the auditory imagination, yet there is definite analogy between the two. The significance of this analogy becomes apparent if we consider that the auditory imagination, by conceptualising associative links between a new poem and poetry written previously, transfigures that poem into a bearer of traces linking it to the past; the capable reader, meanwhile, in perceiving these traces, reproduces the past via the very act of reading. For the reader that possesses a well-developed and finely tuned auditory imagination, in other words, reading constitutes an act of memory, and each new poem reproduces past poetry in the present. As the arguments of the previous chapter serve to demonstrate, this reading experience is akin to that of *The School Bag*, the defining feature of which is the perceived inflection of individual poems by all the others, such that the reader becomes increasingly aware of poems as unique variants on common themes that have persisted through the history of the British Isles. Perception of this very uniqueness presupposes the reader's cognition of both continuity and difference between the poems, and insofar as *continuity* is recognised, a given poem is treated as the bearer of traces of past poems. The reading experience of *The School Bag*, in other words, is essentially *mnemonic*, with the anthology habituating its users in a mode of reading that requires of them acts of memory.

Heaney's auditory imagination, that is, his proven ability to hear in poems the echoes of others, and subsequently to ascribe significance to these echoes, was as much the product of learning as it was aided by certain innate natural propensities. His professorial performances evince the breadth of his reading, as well as his intense familiarity with the works that fall within that range. The tuning of his ear, meanwhile, was indubitably facilitated by the very fact that he was a poet first and foremost, and therefore professionally well-practiced in what he calls the "technical aspects of the work": rhythm, rhyme, form, and so forth (*FK*, loc.1423). To this we could add, as well, the principles

that informed his childhood education, which are different from those presiding over primary and secondary literary education today. As he says to O'Driscoll in response to a question concerning the practice of learning poems by rote: "if you begin belting out poems in primary school and continue learning chunks of Shakespeare and Chaucer until you're eighteen or nineteen, your ear has a fair chance of getting tuned; but if you only start memorizing after that I'm not sure it has much effect" (*SS*, loc.5320).

All these constitute factors that conceivably contributed to the development of Heaney's personal auditory imagination, yet what was surely most vital was Heaney's sense of the evolution of poetry as to a certain extent "cordoned off" from 'suffering'; "proceeding happily and as it were autistically" and therefore not solely directed by events external to strictly artistic considerations (*RP*, 4). It is precisely this sense of poetry as an art-form that has developed according to its own conventions that renders imaginable genealogical links between the earliest poetry and its contemporary manifestations. Heaney, in striving to reify these links in his criticism, poetry and, as can now be seen, in *The School Bag*, thus championed this particular understanding of poetry in contemporary debates over the literary studies discipline.

This returns us, finally, to *The School Bag*'s preface, which states:

> It would be a school-book in the usual sense…but it would also resemble 'a school of poetry' gathered on traditional bardic lines, a memory bank, a compendium of examples… The anthology, in other words, is intended to be a kind of listening post, a book where the reader can tune in to the various notes and strains that have gone into the making of the whole score of poetry in English… After all, what W.B. Yeats once called the 'singing school' is made up in the end of all of us who value poetry and want to remember it and make sense of it in our lives.
>
> *SB*, xv

Framed by the previous discussion, some final conclusions can be made of the likenesses, metaphors, and allusions that help constitute Heaney's final anthology's main paratext. It is a school-book in providing lessons in a particular way of reading, understanding and imagining poetry, and a bardic 'school of poetry' insofar as the lessons it provides are also lessons that, for Heaney, underline the contemporary poet's relation with his predecessors. They school the reader in the mnemonic potential of poetry-reading; the way in which successful poems can, given the right conditions, function as echo-chambers in which their predecessors resound. Fresh and pertinent significance likewise accrues to the preface's call to *listen*, with the listening-post metaphor enlivened by the concept of the *auditory* imagination, and insight granted into what it means to "tune in to…the whole score of poetry", that is, to become receptive to the myriad potential aural relations that exist between poems,

and which therefore constitute a network of relations that transcends historical, regional, ideological, and generic differences between individual poems and poets. Finally, a subtle jab at other practitioners operating within the literary studies discipline that may not fit Heaney's bill of valuing and wanting to remember poetry is registerable, transfiguring Yeats' "singing school" into one school of poetry amongst others, as well as the one within which Heaney the poet-professor taught.

Conclusion

This study of Seamus Heaney's anthologies has demonstrated their potential to interconnect significantly with a diverse range of his preoccupations, from his engagement with contemporary political and social events to his more conspicuously 'academic' activities conducted from the lectern and in the classroom. Within this range, issues of memory, artistic and critical responsibility, the relation between art and non-artistic spheres of life, as well as literary education and pleasure have been broached. Nor, as the very fact that others have perceived some of the anthologies differently suggests, is this an exhaustive catalogue of the significant strands interweaving them into Heaney's opus. The relation between Heaney's anthologies and the most influential of the genre, or those which proved vital to his own education, or even those in which his own work was collected has been touched on only lightly. Similarly, I have hardly considered how Heaney's own critical commentary on the likes of W.B. Yeats, Elizabeth Bishop, and Eastern European poets such as Zbigniew Herbert and Miroslav Holub interacts with his collection of those poets' work in his anthologies. Finally, the possible question of different readerships and of the 'intended' audiences of each anthology has, if addressed at all, been scratched at only. Many questions raised by the anthologies have, in other words, not been addressed, yet I hope that this study has succeeded in representing them as works that are in fact undeserving of the relative scarcity of scholarly attention so far paid to them.

All four of Heaney's anthologies bear witness to Cavanagh's image of the poet as "someone who wants to influence how poetry is thought about". They maintain, therefore, a strong connection to Heaney's critical prose and lectures, and represent an additional platform from which he sought to intervene in the public imagination of poetry. Most pronounced in this respect are their persistent efforts at inculcating particular ways of framing and thus perceiving the poems collected, which in turn can result in adjustments in the reading strategies adopted and executed by users of the anthologies. As is to be expected, analogies are discernible between these recommended ways of reading and the strategies and tendencies exhibited in Heaney's own critical activities, making his work in as an anthologist an insightful means of discussing his work as a critic, and vice versa. The poetry, too, has proven capable of both of framing and being framed by the anthologies, consolidating further links between Heaney's work as an anthologist and his work in other areas, as well as demonstrating the anthologies value as a means of granting fresh perspectives on more familiar examples of his work. The vital role played by storytelling in all four anthologies, meanwhile, has provided an opportunity to shed light on an aspect of Heaney's literary activity that likewise remains underexamined, yet which appears characteristic of his work not just as a poet, but as a prose-writer and teacher as well.

The embeddedness of Heaney's anthologies in the preoccupations and signature features of his work as a poet and professor is clear evidence against relegating them to the peripheries of

scholarly attention. Rather than end on this nonetheless important point, however, I want to close by returning to a consideration of my title. 'Soundings', as this thesis illustrates throughout, accrues to itself a plethora of meanings, associations and connotations when considered in relation to Heaney. It names a distinctive image of poetic composition which Heaney experimented with often, and also describes several forms of critical activity that range from the more literal sense of listening to the sounds made by poems to the more imaginative sense of plumbing their mnemonic depths by listening for associations with those that have been heard before.

When used to signify either composition or reading as an act of memory, the word 'sounding' attains conceptual status, offering, in Bal's phrasing, "miniature theories" that can "help in the analysis of objects, situations, states and other theories". These theories help us to understand a declaration like "he fords his life by sounding", providing material with which to enact an analysis of such a line. Clearly, however, my formulations of the conceptual significance of the word are only a beginning, since the analysis of each new object is bound to highlight, sophisticate and challenge different aspects of the concept, contributing to its development. Though both 'The Gifts of Rain' and Heaney's critical appraisal of the locations in which John Clare's "unmistakeable signature…sounded forth" both draw on a concept of poetic sounding as a tool of development and identity, the precise realisation of the concept is surely different in each, making it the task of future analyses to elucidate further the potential operations of the term.

Of course, underlying this rather more complex conceptual sense of 'sounding' are ones that are more literal and familiar: "to make a sound by blowing, or playing upon, some instrument"; "to strike the ears, to be heard, as a sound" (*OED*). Heaney understood poetry to be, first and foremost, an aural art, and as a poet-professor championed an aural approach to poetry that, at present, has arguably been forced to retreat in the face of others proclaimed to be better suited to making literary study a politically and socially engaged practice. Yet, as Heaney so persistently sought to demonstrate, 'sounding' poetry in the basic sense of *listening* can form the basis of criticism that is as attuned to the history of changing poetic conventions as it is sensitive to the various realities – social, moral, political, or historical – capable of affecting that evolution. The sounds of poetry can, therefore, provide important material for making sense of it, and are moreover a potential source of simple enjoyment. It is important that in attending to the more complex, conceptual significances of the 'sounding', we do not lose sight of the practical foundations supporting them, since these formed as much a part of Heaney's ideal of literary study as his more conspicuously theoretical endeavours.

Such conclusions illustrate the multivalence of Heaney's 'soundings'. This, of course, is entirely appropriate for a poet-professor who was alert to the possibilities inherent in the *double-entendre* of a phrase like 'the government of the tongue' (see *GT*, loc.1940), and who began a lecture series entitled *The Redress of Poetry* with a series of definitions of the term 'redress' (see *RP*, 14). In

displaying the plasticity of Heaney's 'soundings', therefore, I have followed his own example. Sounding Heaney's anthologies may involve treating each poem as a 'sounding' in and of itself, a way of reading that implies the execution of a narrative framing of the work in question. The reader may also 'sound' each poem in the manner invited by *The Rattle Bag*, enjoying the range of sounds made available to the reader by the poet. Finally, if properly schooled, the reader may even cast lines back through the poem, listening for echoes of past traditions and resonances with the traditions of others. These ways of reading are not restricted to Heaney's anthologies; to the contrary, the lessons learnt from each are clearly transferable across the anthologies, as well as to poems not collected therein. As such, Heaney's anthologies represent valuable educational instruments, and bear positive testimony to his legacy as a great teacher as well as a poet.

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